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IN BIBLE HANDS





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A STREET IN JERUSALEM.

IN BIBLE LANDS.

BY

REV. RICHARD NEWTON, D.D.,

AUTHOR OF "NATURE'S WONDERS," "THE KING'S HIGHWAY," ETC.

"Where is the land with milk and honey flowing
The promise of our God, our fancy's theme?
Here over shattered walls dank weeds are growing,
And blood and fire have run in mingled stream."

KEBLE.

WITH SIXTY ENGRAVINGS.



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P R E F A C E.

N the year 1870 it was my privilege to visit the Holy Land. While journeying through that land a series of letters was written, giving an account of the interesting places visited there, in connection with the scenes referred to in the history of the Bible. These letters were continued after my return home, till all the places visited on that journey had been described.

The two series of letters have been combined together and thrown into the form of consecutive chapters, and so constitute, with considerable additional matter, the substance of the present volume. In preparing it, my hope has been that a book might thus be furnished that would be at once attractive to younger readers, and at the same time interesting and profitable to those of maturer years. If this hope should be realized in any good degree, I shall feel devoutly thankful.

Many books, it is true, have been published on this subject. But every thoughtful student of the Bible, when describing his visit to the land where that Book was written, though speaking of localities which others have described before, will yet see some things in a different

light from that in which others have looked at them, and will receive different impressions respecting them. And thus, though the theme of the present volume is an old one, yet, like "the Book of books," to which it relates, our interest in it is ever new. I can say in truth, that of all the journeys ever made in a life now getting to be one of some length, the journey made up of these "Rambles through Bible Lands" has been to me by far the most interesting and profitable. And while, on the one hand, those who have had a personal experience of the power and preciousness of the truth which the Bible teaches need no external evidences of the divine origin of that blessed Book; yet, on the other, to those who are doubtful about it, there is nothing like a journey through the Holy Land to establish confidence in the great fact that the Bible is what it claims to be, and that it never could have been written in any other land than that with which its history is connected. And next to a personal inspection of that land, the testimony of others as to its geography and history may be made useful to the same end.

This is strikingly illustrated in the following incident:—

In a village in Yorkshire, England, lived two men who were cloth manufacturers. One was named Walsh, and the other Stetson. Walsh was an unbeliever. It was a favourite opinion of his that the Bible was "all made up." He could never believe that it was written where it professed to be, and by the men said to have written it. But Stetson was an earnest Christian.

Walsh was part owner of a factory, and one year he had set his heart on making a very large and fine piece of cloth. He took great pains with the carding, spinning, dyeing, weaving,

and finishing of it. In the process of manufacture, it was one day stretched out on the tenter-hooks to dry. It made a fine show, and he felt very proud of it. The next morning he arose early to work at it; to his amazement, it was gone. Some one had stolen it during the night.

After weeks of anxiety and expense, a piece of cloth answering the description was stopped at Manchester, awaiting the owner and proof. Away to Manchester went Walsh, as fast as the express train could carry him. There he found many rolls of cloth which had been stolen. They were very much alike. He selected one which he felt satisfied was his. But how could he prove it? In doubt and perplexity he called on his neighbour Stetson.

"Friend Stetson," said he, "I have found a piece of cloth which I am sure is the one which was stolen from me. But how to prove it, is the question. Can you tell me how?"

"You don't want it unless it's really yours?"

"Certainly not."

"And you want proof that is plain, simple, and such as will satisfy yourself and everybody?"

"Precisely so."

"Well, then, take Bible proof."

"Bible proof! Pray, what is that?"

"Take your cloth to the tenter-hooks on which it was stretched, and if it be yours, every hook will just fit the hole through which it passed before being taken down. There will be scores of such hooks, and if the hooks and the holes just come together right, no other proof will be wanted that the cloth is yours."

"True. Why didn't I think of this before?"

Away he went, and, sure enough, every hook came to its little hole, and the cloth was proved to be his. The tenter-hooks were the very best evidence that could be had.

Some days after this, Walsh met his friend again.

"I say, Stetson," said he, "what did you mean, the other day, by calling the tenter-hooks 'Bible proof'? I'm sure if I had as good evidence for the Bible as I had for my cloth, I never should doubt it again."

"You have the same, only better, for the Bible."

"How so?"

"Put it on the tenter-hooks. Take the Bible and travel with it; go to the place where it was made. There you find the Red Sea, the Jordan, the Lake of Galilee, Mount Lebanon, Hermon, Carmel, Tabor, and Gerizim; there you find the cities of Damascus, Hebron, Tyre, Sidon, and Jerusalem. Every mountain, every river, every sheet of water mentioned in the Bible, is there, just as the Bible speaks of it. Sinai, and the desert, and the Dead Sea, are there. The holes and the hooks come together exactly. The best guide-book through that country is the Bible. It must have been written there on the spot, just as your cloth must have been made and stretched on your tenter-hooks. That land is the mould in which the Bible was cast; and when you bring the land and the Book together, they fit to perfection."

Walsh felt the force of this argument, and he gave up his infidelity, and began to read the Bible with an interest he never had felt in it before.

May God bless this book, and make it useful to every reader, in strengthening his faith and deepening his interest in that best of all books—the Bible.

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IN BIBLE LANDS.

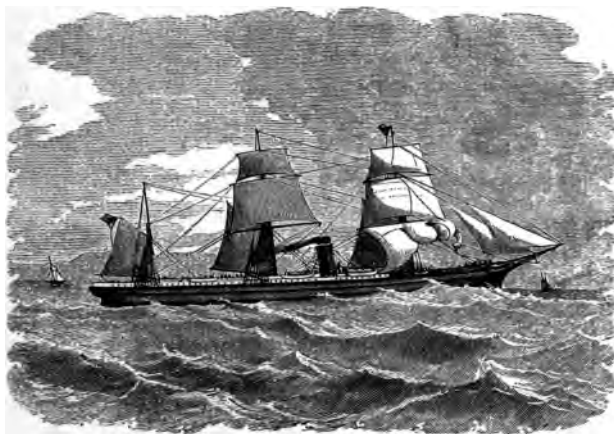
CHAPTER I.

THE VOYAGE ACROSS THE OCEAN—A VISIT TO PISA, WITH ITS LEANING TOWER, AND TO THE CITY OF CAIRO.

WE left home for our journey through the Holy Land in the middle of January. At that season of the year it would be most natural to expect a long and stormy voyage. But in this we were agreeably disappointed. We met with no storms. The weather was pleasant all the way over. There was no day when we could not comfortably walk up and down the deck of the vessel; and on the tenth day after leaving New York we landed safely at Liverpool.

On the next page is a picture of the steamer *Cuba*—the good ship that carried us over the ocean. When I took my first walk on the deck of this vessel, after leaving New York, I looked round to find something to write about to my young friends at home. Very soon I saw something that suggested two good lessons. There were three or four large compasses fastened to the deck of the vessel; and then there was another compass about twenty feet overhead, fastened to the mast of the vessel. You know that

the mariner's compass is a little piece of steel, called a needle, which is set on a sharp iron pivot, fixed in a box which has a glass cover to it. This needle has the wonderful power, which God has given it, of always pointing to the north. And this is what enables the sailor to steer his vessel all over the ocean, when he is out of sight of land. And when I saw the sailor looking at these compasses so often, I thought *how careful sailors are to find*



THE STEAMSHIP "CUBA."

out how to steer their vessel! They teach us a very good lesson here. You might think that one compass would be enough on board a ship. But here were three or four compasses on the deck of this same vessel. You may ask, "What do they want so many for?" The reason is that sometimes a compass gets out of order, and then, if there were no other near, the vessel might be steered wrong, and so lose her way or get into danger. But when there are several compasses, if one gets wrong, the others will

show it, and so the sailor is able to keep his vessel in the right course. What a lesson we may learn from this! The Bible is *our* compass. It points out the way that we must go if we wish to get to heaven. If we are only careful to find out how it points, and then to follow its pointing, it will guide us through all the dangers that are around us on the sea of life, and bring us safely home to heaven at last. This is a good lesson to learn from the sailors.

And then there is another good lesson taught us by that compass fastened up on the mast. It hangs up there in such a way that you can tell in a moment, from looking at it, the way the needle points. But what is that compass, so high up on the mast, put there for? For a very good reason. You see these steamers are built of iron. And iron attracts or draws the needle of a compass near to it, so that it cannot always be depended on. But that compass up the mast is out of the reach of the iron. There is nothing to disturb its needle. The sailor can depend on it, therefore, with more certainty. And when I saw the captain stand on deck, and look to that compass up on the mast, to see if he was going right, then it seemed to me we were taught this lesson,—*We must look up to heaven for guidance if we wish to do right.* It is not enough for the sailor to have a compass on deck. He must have one up aloft, and he must look carefully to *that*, if he would be sure of going right.

And this is just the way in which we must act. When we read our Bibles, we are like the sailor looking at his compass on deck. It is right for us to do this; but then there is something more for us to do; for if we trust to our own understanding of the Bible, we shall be sure to get wrong. This is like having nothing but a compass

on deck. But if we pray earnestly to God to help us to understand what we read in our Bibles, then we are like the sailor when he looks to the compass up aloft for guidance. This is the only way for us to get on in safety. Then let us read the Bible diligently every day, for this is our compass. But when we do this, let us look up to God in prayer, that we may understand what we read. If we do this we shall be sure to go right, and get safe to the heavenly harbour at last. Remember *how carefully the sailor watches his compass, and how earnestly he looks aloft for his surest guidance*, and let us imitate his example in these respects.

We made a very short stay in England. I will not stop now to tell about that. Hurrying over to France, we passed rapidly through that country, and then along down the western coast of Italy. I will only stop to speak of one visit that we made in the course of this journey. This was at the city of Pisa, with its celebrated Leaning Tower.

The steamer in which we were sailing stopped for a day at the city of Leghorn. As we had nothing to do till the steamer started again, we concluded to spend the day in visiting the old city of Pisa, which is only half an hour's ride by the railway from Leghorn. This town of Pisa contains some very interesting buildings. Of these the most curious one is the Leaning Tower. Almost everybody has heard about this famous tower. Here is a picture of it. It is seven hundred years old, having been built nearly three hundred years before Columbus discovered America. It is 179 feet high, and is built of solid marble. There are seven high stories in it, each of which is supported by a circular row of marble columns. There is a flight of stone stairs inside the tower, leading to the top of it; and

these stairs contain 294 steps. The tower is built near a large church to which it belongs, and is used as the bell-tower of the church, or instead of a steeple. On the top of it are a number of bells, the largest of which is said



LEANING TOWER OF PISA.

to weigh twelve thousand pounds. But the most curious thing about this tower is, that instead of standing straight up, as towers generally do, it leans over on one side, just as if it were going to fall. This is what has given it the name it bears, the *Leaning Tower* of Pisa. And it leans

not a little either. If a straight line were let down on the leaning side, from the top of the tower to the bottom, it is said there would be a difference of about thirteen feet between the top and the bottom. I mean by this that the top of the tower leans over *thirteen* feet from where it would be if it were straight. This is a great deal for such a high tower to lean.

But perhaps some of you may be ready to ask, "How came this tower to lean so?" Ah! that is a question which a great many people have asked. Every one who visits the tower asks this question. But it is much easier to ask it than to answer it. The fact is, nobody is able to answer it. There is no one living now who can tell how the tower came to lean as it does. Some think that the foundation of the tower has sunk on one side, and this is the reason why it leans. Others think that it was built from the beginning to lean, just as it does now, and that the builder wanted to see how much he could make a tower to lean without falling over. Which of these opinions is the right one I cannot pretend to say; but one thing is very certain, the tower *does* lean. The tower in Pisa is a *leaning tower*.

Well, but what good will it do to see this tower? or what use can be made of it by writing about it? While I was looking at that leaning tower, it led me to think a good deal about that Tower that does not lean. Jesus is spoken of in the Bible as such a tower. David calls him his "high tower" (Ps. xviii. 1).

And it is interesting to think of some of the points of difference between this tower of Pisa and the Tower of which the Bible tells us, or between the tower that leans and the Tower that does *not* lean.

The first difference between them is in their position.

The one leans, while the other is straight. It is a very curious thing to come and *look* at a leaning tower; but if we had to *live* on it, we should find it very awkward. It would make us feel very unsafe all the time. When I got to the upper part of this tower, I would not have gone round the walk on the outside, where there was no railing between the columns, for all the wealth in Pisa. It seemed as though one would certainly slip off and fall down; and this is a very uncomfortable feeling to have on a tower. But when we come to Jesus, the Tower of which the Bible tells us, we need have no fear of this kind. This Tower is straight. Those who get on it are safe. Jesus puts his everlasting arms under them, and spreads his sheltering wings over them. He becomes their keeper, and this is what makes them safe.

The second difference between these two towers is in their age. The tower of Pisa was built seven hundred years ago. That is a long time to look back to. But it is nothing compared to the age of the Bible Tower. This never had a beginning. If any one had gone to Pisa more than seven hundred years ago, he would have found no leaning tower there then. But there never was a time when this Tower of the Bible did not exist. Jesus says of himself, that he was "set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was" (Prov. viii. 23). And the apostle tells us that He "was in the beginning with God" (John i. 2).

The third difference between the towers is in the length of time they will last. I cannot tell how long the tower in Pisa will last. But it *looks* very old. It *is* very old. Time and the weather have done it much harm. Many of the stones are very much worn away. One of these days it must fall; and then there will be no leaning tower in

Pisa. But Jesus, the Tower of the Bible, does not grow old. Time makes no difference with him. He is the "same yesterday, to-day, and for ever."

And then the fourth difference between these towers is in their uses. The tower in Pisa is only of use for two things: one is to ring bells on; the other is to look at. No one lives on it. No one ever thinks of going to it for shelter or defence, for help or comfort. But how different is it with Jesus, the blessed and glorious Tower about which we read in the Bible! Jesus is a Tower for his people to live in. And he not only gives life to those who come to him, but pardon and peace, protection and shelter, help and comfort, and every blessing they need to make them happy, both while they live in this world and when they come to die. Let us all get on this Bible Tower, and we shall find that the words of the hymn will then be true in reference to us, for—

"There, safe we shall abide;
There sweet will be our rest,
And every longing satisfied,
With full salvation blest."

After leaving Leghorn we went to Naples, and from there to Messina, on the Island of Sicily. There we took another steamer and sailed across the Mediterranean Sea, to the celebrated town of Alexandria. While stopping here, we took a donkey-ride through the town, and went to see the famous "Pompey's Pillar" and "Cleopatra's Needle." These are two well-known columns, which have stood there for more than eighteen hundred years.

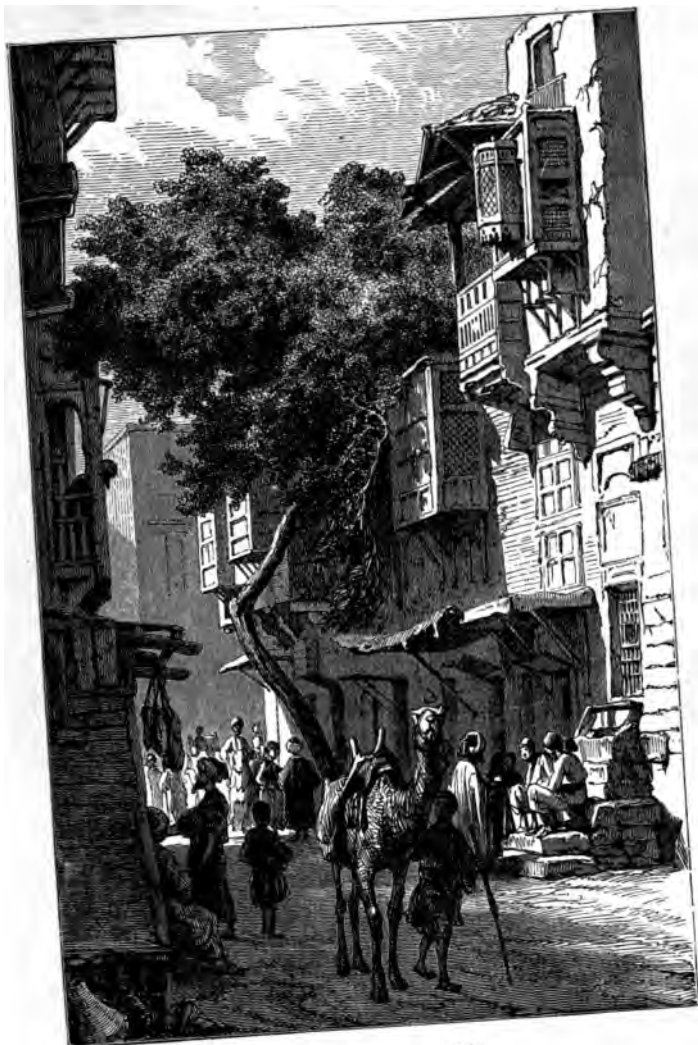
The next day we started by the railroad, and after an interesting ride through the northern part of Egypt and across several branches of the Nile, we came to the city of Cairo.



ALEXANDRIA

This city is situated on the Nile, that famous river about which we read so much in the Bible. It was in this part of Egypt that the land of Goshen was situated, which Pharaoh gave to Joseph, for his father Jacob, and his brethren with their families, to live in. And it was here, when the children of Israel had increased greatly, and another Pharaoh arose who "knew not Joseph," that they were made the slaves of the Egyptians, and were compelled to do such hard work for their masters, in making bricks and building cities for them. And you see the people in this country making bricks, to-day, in just the same way in which the Israelites used to make them. We read in the 5th chapter of Exodus that they used straw in making bricks; and when Pharaoh took away their straw, and still required them to make the same number, or "tale of bricks," as before, they were in great trouble. I passed by a brick-field one day, and saw some men making bricks. They had a lot of clay on one side, and a quantity of straw cut up into short pieces on the other. Then they would take a handful of straw and mix it up with the clay, before it was put into the boxes or moulds which were to give it the proper shape and size. The straw is put into the clay to make it hold together better, just as our plasterers put hair into their mortar for the same purpose. These bricks are not burnt as ours are, but only dried in the sun. When I saw those men at work, it made me think about the Israelites; and I felt how true the Bible history is in all the accounts which it gives us.

It was on this river Nile, perhaps not far from where we stayed, that Jochebed, the mother of Moses, lived, and where she hid her child for three months; and here, when she could not hide him any longer, that she made the ark of bulrushes, and laid it "in the flags by the river's brink."



STREET IN CAIRO.

It was here, too, that God sent Pharaoh's daughter to find the floating baby, and then to adopt him as her own child; so that Moses became the "son of Pharaoh's daughter." It was only about six miles from Cairo that Joseph became acquainted with the young woman whom he married, "Asenath, the daughter of Poti-pherah, priest of On" (Gen. xli. 45). That was the most famous place of learning in the world then. That was the place where Moses went to school and received his education. There it was that he became "learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians" (Acts vii. 22). How wonderfully God orders things so as to prepare men for the work he has for them to do! Moses would not have been fitted to be the deliverer and ruler and lawgiver of the Israelites unless he had had all that learning and wisdom. When he was born, if any one had told his mother that her son was to have such an education, she would no doubt have said that it was impossible. It *was* so to her, or to her husband; but nothing is impossible with God.

This city of Cairo is a very large city. It contains about four hundred thousand people. And they are the strangest-looking people you ever saw. Some of the streets are so narrow, that a person may stand in the middle and, by reaching out his arms, almost touch the houses on both sides at once. But narrow as they are, they are crowded with people, buying and selling in them; and with donkeys and camels, hurrying along with great loads of different kinds of things.

I saw a great many things here that reminded me of what we read about in the Bible, and that furnish very interesting illustrations of those things. There are two especially of which I wish now to speak. The pictures of them are taken from photographs bought at Cairo.

The first is a picture of a young Arab boy. He has a red Fez cap on his head, a long white mantle over his shoulders, and a long rod, or staff, in his right hand. He is what we would call a runner. There are great numbers of them in the streets of Cairo. They are straight, strong, good-looking boys. When people ride in carriages here — not through the crooked and narrow streets of which I have spoken, but others that are newer and wider—they have one of these boys to run before the carriage. As he does this, he keeps waving his rod and calling to the



ARAB BOY

people to get out of the way. Perhaps you will not wonder at this so much when told that even the widest streets here are what we should call narrow. None of them have any sidewalks or stone pavements. The streets are full of people, all in the middle; and as the wheels of a carriage roll along without making any noise, either the driver would have to walk his horses, or else he would be all the time running over somebody. And when I saw one of these runners hurrying on before a carriage, I was

reminded of what we read in the Bible about the prophet Elijah. You remember, on one occasion, when there had been no rain in the land of Israel for more than three years, Elijah prayed to God to send rain. After praying, he sent his servant to the top of Mount Carmel to see if there was any sign of its coming. Presently he said



ARAB WATER-CARRIER.

that he saw "a little cloud like a man's hand" rising from the sea. Then Elijah sent word to the king to get into his chariot and hasten home, before the rain should stop him. He did so; and we read in 1 Kings xviii. 46, "And the hand of the Lord was on Elijah; and he girded up his loins, and ran before Ahab to the entrance of Jezreel."

Here we have, in the customs of these people to-day, a striking illustration of

this incident in the history which the Bible gives us.

The second picture represents an Arab water-carrier. You remember that, in one of his sermons, our Saviour told his disciples that no man would put new wine into old bottles, because the bottles would burst, and the wine would be spilt (Matt. ix. 17). Now with glass bottles

such as we use, this would not be the case. Old bottles, with us, so long as they are not cracked, are just as good as new ones. But it was very different with the Jews in our Saviour's time. The bottles they used were made of the skins of animals. When these bottles were old or unused, they would dry up and crack. Then if wine or water was put into them, it would all run out and be spilled. And these are the kind of bottles used in this country at the present day. Nearly all the drinking water now used in Cairo is brought from the river Nile; and it is carried in just such *bottles* as you see the man in this picture carrying on his back. This is a bottle made out of the skin of a goat. The head and feet of the animal are cut off. Then the skin is removed from the body, and it is carefully sewed up, leaving an opening at the neck, or at one of the feet, and the "*bottle*" is ready for use. You cannot go out into the streets here without meeting men carrying these skin bottles. When the skins are very large, they are carried on the backs of donkeys; and it is very interesting to be meeting all the time with such an illustration of the meaning of our Saviour's teaching.

And so in these pictures we have good illustrations of different passages in the Bible.

CHAPTER II.

THE PYRAMIDS AND THEIR LESSONS—INCIDENTS AT THE PYRAMIDS—THE
FATAL RUN—THE GOOD MELICAN MAN—THE BATTLE OF THE SHEIKS.

EGYPT is a wonderful land. It is connected in our minds with our earliest recollections of the Bible. Some of the most interesting stories of the Bible are so inwoven with this land, that we can never think of them without thinking of Egypt; and any reference to Egypt always recalls those stories. It was to this land that Joseph was brought as a sorrowing stranger, when sold into bondage by his cruel and envious brethren. It was here that he resisted so manfully the great temptation to which he was exposed. It was here that he lay so long in prison, when God, by his mysterious providence, was preparing him for the exalted position of usefulness and honour which he was afterwards to occupy. It was here that his strange dreams were so wondrously fulfilled, when his brethren, all ignorant of his relation to them, came humbly bowing down and making obeisance before him. It was here that the children of Israel were held so long in cruel bondage, and were delivered at last in that wonderful way, which stands to the present time without anything to be compared to it in the history of the world. And it was here, too, that our blessed Saviour, in his infant days, found a refuge, with his father and mother, from the cruel designs of that wicked king Herod.

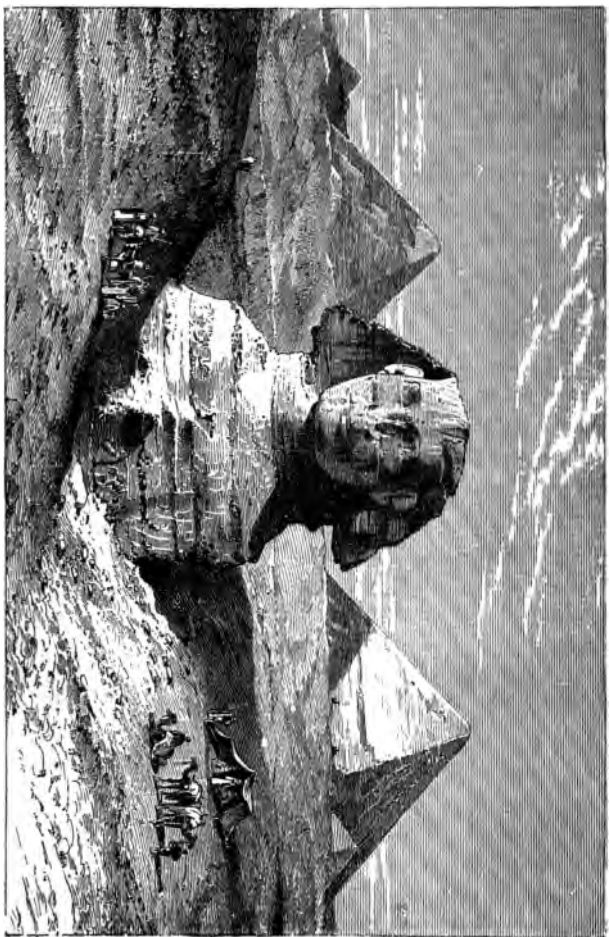
Egypt is wonderful for its own history, too, as well as for its connection with the history of the Bible. It is wonderful for the learning of which it was once the seat, and for the surprising works of art which it has produced. Among all these there is nothing which has excited more surprise and wonder than the Pyramids, of which I wish now to speak.

We spent a day, while stopping at Cairo, in making an excursion to the largest of the Pyramids, and it was an exceedingly interesting day. These are called the Pyramids of Gheezeh, or Jhizeh. There are three in this group, though our picture only takes in two. It is the larger of these two, known as "the Great Pyramid," to which we now particularly refer. We climbed up to the top of it, and afterwards entered the dark passage which leads to the silent and mysterious chamber in the interior of it.

The ascent is very toilsome, not owing so much to the height of the structure, as to the great size of the stones of which it is composed. It is just like going up a pair of very steep stairs, every step of which is from two to three or three and a half feet high. In going up, each visitor has three Arabs assigned him as guides, or attendants. Two of these go on before you, taking hold of each of your hands, while the third pushes you up from behind. And when this comes to be continued till you gain the height of 460 feet—an elevation as great as that of two or three ordinary church steeples set one above the other—it gets to be very fatiguing before reaching the top. The present height of the largest Pyramid is represented by the above figures. As originally built it measured 480 feet. But then it had an outside covering of smooth, polished stones. These are said to have been removed by the Caliphs of Egypt for houses and other buildings erected in Cairo.

The sides of this Pyramid, at its base, measure 746 feet each, which make a square about the size of a twelve acre field. This immense space, to the height above stated, is built up with solid stone. The Pyramid is founded on the original rock. The stones of which it is built are of great size, and are cemented firmly together. It is one of the largest and oldest works of man to be found anywhere in our world.

A great many books have been written about the Pyramids. Learned men have differed very much in their opinions about the time when they were built, about the names of the persons who built them, and, especially, about the object for which they were built. The general opinion on this last point, and probably the correct one, is that they were designed as the tombs of the kings who built them. Some have supposed that they were designed for the purpose of making astronomical observations; and an English gentleman has lately written a book to prove that the real design of the Great Pyramid was to preserve the true standard of measure. He goes into an elaborate calculation to show that the dimensions of the central chamber of this Pyramid and the stone coffer which it contained were so arranged as to afford to those who visited it, from among all nations, the true and unchanging standard of measure. We shall enter into no speculations about these different theories, but, assuming that the common opinion is the correct one, which looks upon the Pyramids as designed to be the monuments of those who built them, shall proceed to draw out from these stupendous piles some of the lessons which they teach. These huge Pyramids were built by men who were living and labouring only to please themselves. We may well regard the Pyramids, therefore, as illustrating *the difference between*



THE SPHINX AND THE PYRAMIDS.

working for Jesus and working for self. And, as we look at the Pyramids and their history, we see this difference illustrated in several interesting and instructive ways.

In the first place, we learn from the history of the Pyramids *that working for Jesus is MUCH EASIER than working for self.*

When the king who built the Great Pyramid began that work, he had a wonderful amount of hard labour before him. The stones employed in building it were brought a long distance, from some quarries in Arabia. Herodotus, the oldest historian in the world, outside of the Bible, says that a new road had to be made for transporting those stones, and that a hundred thousand men were employed, for ten years, in making that road. The same writer tells us that three hundred and sixty thousand men were employed, for twenty years, in getting out the stones for the Great Pyramid, and in finishing the building of it. Now, if we remember how hard the Israelites had to work, when they were slaves in Egypt, under their cruel taskmasters, or if we could see the Egyptian labourers of the present day working in the same way, while men stand by with long sticks or whips in their hands with which they beat the poor men and boys if they think they are not working hard enough, then we could understand how much hard work had to be done, and how much cruel suffering had to be borne, by the many thousands of men employed to build the Pyramids. The man for whom they toiled was thinking only of himself, and caring only for himself. The sighs and groans and tears and sufferings of the multitudes who were toiling for him he never thought of or cared for. And though he had not to work with his own hands, as the poor slaves did who toiled over the stones of the Pyramids, yet he must have had a great deal of anxiety

and care in managing the whole business, and in getting everything done as he desired it.

But if we are working for Jesus, instead of for ourselves, how different our position is from that of the builder of the Pyramids! Then, whether we are rulers or subjects, kings or peasants, rich men or poor, we are saved from the temptation of engaging in any such foolish works. Our great object in life is to please Him. In trying to do this we shall be saved from the desire to oppress or injure any one. We shall take Jesus himself for our example, in the spirit which he manifested when he said, "I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me." It is the love of Jesus that will lead us to desire to do this will; and it is the almighty grace of Jesus which will help us to do it. And it is the influence of this love and grace that will make us feel how true the words of Jesus were when he said, "Take my yoke upon you and learn of me: for my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." And so, when we think of the immense amount of toil and suffering which the building of the Pyramids cost, we have a good illustration of the truth that working for Jesus is easier than working for self.

But, in the second place, we may learn from this subject *that work done for Jesus is MORE ENDURING than work done for self.*

Nobody knows exactly how long the Pyramids have stood. There can be little doubt, however, that they are at least between three and four thousand years old. This seems like a very long time; and so it is, compared with the duration of most of the works of men with which we are acquainted. We build houses and churches which last fifty or seventy or a hundred years, and then are taken down. When we visit cathedrals and other buildings which have

lasted for several hundred years, we look at them with feelings of peculiar interest and veneration, on account of their great age. And yet, in comparison with the Pyramids, the oldest buildings in Europe are only like infants compared with old men of the age of eighty or ninety years. But, old as the Pyramids are in themselves, when we compare them with eternity, they are only like things of yesterday. And old as the Pyramids are, and solid and substantial as they appear, yet the time will come when they will be destroyed and the very *memory* of them will pass away.

The Bible tells us that the names of the wicked, and their works as well, shall perish. They will be "rooted out." They will all pass away, like the visions of the night, and no trace of them will be left on the earth. No works that men do for themselves can be made permanent or enduring. They cannot be made really lasting. They are only like names written on the sand by the seaside; the waves of time will roll over them and sweep them all away.

But it is very different with works that are done for Jesus. These may not be known on earth, but they are all known in heaven. Everything that is done for Jesus, even down to "a cup of cold water" given to one of the least of his followers, will be written in the book of God's remembrance. And nothing that is written there will ever be forgotten. We are told that "the righteous shall be in *everlasting* remembrance." And this is true of the name of every follower of Jesus, and of all the works he has done out of love to him. What pains men take to have their names and deeds remembered when they shall have passed away! But, no matter what they do, it is all lost labour so long as they live and act without loving and

serving God. The humblest Christian who is working for Jesus as a Sunday-school missionary or teacher, or in any other way, will be honoured of God and have his works remembered and rewarded, when the Pyramids and their builders, and all the proudest works that wicked, God-forgetting men have performed, will be buried in forgetfulness. Works done for Jesus are more enduring than works done for self.

In the third place, the history of the Pyramids shows us *that works done for Jesus are MORE HONOURABLE than works done for self.*

There can be no doubt but that the men who built the Pyramids thought they would be sure to gain great honour and glory to their names by means of the huge buildings which they erected. As long as those vast piles of solid stones remained, they supposed that their names would be connected with them, and that people would come from all parts of the earth to look at the Pyramids, and talk of the power and wonder at the greatness of the men who built them. But they were greatly mistaken in thinking so. The Pyramids remain to this day, indeed; but the names of their builders have passed away. No one can tell with any certainty who built them. How often has the question been asked, which we find in the "Address to the Mummy,"—

*"Was Cheops or Cephrenes architect
Of either pyramid that bears his name?"*

But though so often asked, no one can answer it. The honour which those old kings thought to secure when they built the Pyramids has eluded their grasp, like a shadow when you try to seize it.

How different it is with those who work for Jesus! He says of such, "Them that honour me I will honour." We

have an example of the way in which he does this, in Matthew xxvi. 6-13. We read there about the woman who brought a box of ointment and poured it on his head. She did it to show her great love to him. Jesus was pleased with what she did, and he honours this woman by causing the good work she had done to be written in the Gospels, and thus to be known all over the world where the gospel goes. It was a little thing which this woman did ; but it gained her more honour than the builders of the Pyramids gained by all the time and money and labour spent on them. This woman gained "the honour that cometh from God." There is no honour like this. Let us work for Jesus, and then this honour will be ours ; for it is written, "This honour have all his saints" (Ps. cxlix. 9).

And then, lastly, we learn from the history of the Pyramids *that working for Jesus is MORE USEFUL than working for self.*

It is impossible to calculate the amount of money that was spent in building the Pyramids. Herodotus says that sixteen hundred talents of gold were spent in buying the *onions* and *garlic* used by the workmen employed on the Great Pyramid. And if we take all the other expenses at the same rate, how enormous the whole cost must have been ! And then, out of the three hundred and sixty thousand men employed for twenty years upon it, how many must have lost their lives from the hard labour, cruel treatment, and exposure to which they were subjected ! And what was it all for ? What good have the Pyramids done ? Of what use have they been to any person ? What instruction have they given ? What information have they afforded to those who are ignorant ? What comfort have they offered to those in trouble ? What help or assistance to those in need ? Their tops

point to heaven, indeed, but they have never taught a single soul how to get there. They speak to us about the pride and selfishness of men, but they utter not a word about the character of God, or of the way in which we are to please and serve him. For all these purposes the Pyramids are utterly useless. The money and time and labour spent on them were utterly thrown away. The men who built the Pyramids were working for themselves. The history of the Pyramids shows how useless this kind of working is.

How different it is with those who work for Jesus! Robert Raikes was working for Jesus when he established the first Sunday-school, now almost a hundred years ago. And who can estimate the amount of good that has been done in the world by this blessed instrumentality from that day to this? What floods of light have been spread abroad! How many ignorant ones have been instructed! How many sorrowing ones have been comforted! How many who were plagues to society have been made good and useful! How many who were lost have been saved! And what glory has been given to God in consequence of the usefulness of that one good man, in the work he did for Jesus! And this is only a single illustration out of multitudes that might be given. Every Sunday-school in the land is an illustration of the same kind. Every Sunday-school missionary and teacher is an illustration, too, of this truth, that working for Jesus is useful work. Then let us all engage earnestly in this blessed work. And when we think of the great Pyramids, let us remember what an illustration they afford that working for Jesus is *easier* than working for self; that it is *more lasting, more honourable, and more useful*.

And now, having spoken of the lessons suggested by the

Pyramids, I wish to refer to one or two little incidents which occurred in connection with our visit.

As we stood on the top of the Great Pyramid, glad of the opportunity of resting from the labour of our long and toilsome effort to clamber up there, one of the attendant Arabs came to us, and offered, if each of us would give him a franc, to run down the side of the Pyramid on which we stood, and up to the top of the second Pyramid adjoining it, *in ten minutes!* It seemed incredible, but we were assured it was often done. Yet the danger seemed so great, that we felt unwilling to assume the responsibility of tempting any man to encounter it.

Before leaving Cairo, we learned that on the very day after our visit to the Pyramid, a party of tourists, while standing where we had stood, had the same offer made to them. They accepted it. The Arab started. He flew down the side of the Great Pyramid like the wind. In good time to accomplish the perilous feat, he was nearing the top of the second Pyramid, when his foot slipped. He fell down the side of the vast structure, and was killed! Then we felt thankful for the course we had taken on the preceding day.

A glance at the second Pyramid in our picture will explain this. There may be seen the remains of the outer coating of smooth stones which originally covered all the Pyramids. These have been all removed from the Great Pyramid. A portion of them still covers the upper part of the second Pyramid. This presents a smooth surface for the foot to tread on. It was here that the unfortunate Arab fell, and thus lost his life.

An amusing incident occurred in connection with our ascent of the Pyramid.

When a party of tourists are about to make this ascent,

the sheik who enjoys the privilege of levying contributions on these relics of antiquity details three Bedouin Arabs to attend on each visitor, and aid him in making the toilsome ascent. Two of these go before you, each having hold of one hand, and so pulling you up. The third follows after you, and pushes you up from behind. As soon as you start on your way, these men begin to clamour for "*backsheesh*." To stay this clamour, I told my men that if they said anything more about "*backsheesh*," I should give them none; but that if they were quiet, I would pay them when we came down. From consulting Murray's guide-book, it appeared that two francs apiece was considered a proper sum to give, and this I had made up my mind to give to each of my attendants.

One of our company, however, Brother C——, adopted a different policy. It may have been that he was more generous than the rest of us, or it may have been that a higher sense of danger suggested to him that "the better part of valour was discretion." As he looked down from the dizzy heights up which he was climbing, the thought may have occurred to him, "How easy it would be for one of these fellows to give me a push, and I should go down a great deal faster than I am going up, and when I got to the bottom I should not be feeling by any means so comfortable as I did before starting." So he thought it best to conciliate their good-will by dealing out to each of them a very liberal *backsheesh* before reaching the top. While we were resting there, these men informed their companions of the good fortune which had befallen them.

On our way down, the rest of the company gave to each attendant the fee suggested in the guide-book, two francs apiece. Their long faces and blank looks showed how great their disappointment was. Holding the despised

trifle in the left hand, they gazed contemptuously at it for a moment, and then pointing to our Brother C——, exclaimed: "You ask you friend what he give. He good Melican man" (American); "he give *plenty* backsheesh." But the appeal was in vain. We resolved to stand by the authority of the guide-book. As for our Brother C——, we cordially endorsed the honourable title he had won for himself on that classic ground, where "forty centuries were looking down upon him." He deserves it well; for in a better and a broader sense than those lucre-loving Arabs intended, all his friends will agree in the opinion that he is in very deed and truth "a *good* Melican man."

How often it happens that the "enchantment which distance lends to our view," either of persons or places, is dispelled when we come to take a closer look at them! How many people think that an Arab sheik must be an interesting character—a noble specimen of humanity! The scene which met us on our descent from the Pyramids was not calculated to strengthen any such impression. A fierce contest was waging between two neighbouring sheiks, in which one or both might have come to grief, if some of their followers had not interfered to separate them. On inquiring of our guide, Ben Hassan, about the cause of this conflict, he informed us that one of those *noble* chieftains had lost—not a bag of gold, nor a casket of diamonds, nor a favourite steed, but—a *piece of candle*, which he charged the other chief with stealing!

CHAPTER III.

FROM PORT SAID TO JAFFA—LANDING—ARRANGEMENTS FOR OUR
JOURNEY—HISTORY AND DESCRIPTION OF JAFFA—HOUSE OF SIMON
THE TANNER—THE FIRST DAY'S JOURNEY—ENCAMPMENT AT
RAMLEH.



WE embarked on board a French steamer at Port Said on the evening of Tuesday, March 8th, 1870. This port is the entrance, on the Mediterranean side, to the great canal of Suez, one of the greatest triumphs of modern engineering. It connects together the waters of the Mediterranean and the Red Sea, and thus makes an island of what has hitherto been known in geography as the continent of Africa. It is destined, undoubtedly, to revolutionize the commerce of the Eastern world, by avoiding the necessity of the long voyage round the Cape of Good Hope, and making the Isthmus of Suez the great highway for the trade of Europe with the Orient.

The night of our embarking was calm and still. "The great sea westward" was as smooth and placid as a garden pond; and on awaking at five o'clock the next morning, we found our steamer approaching the land in full view of Jaffa, the port of entrance for Jerusalem. The sun was rising beautifully as we came to anchor, shedding a flood of golden glory over the distant hills of Judea.

We found no difficulty in landing. By the time we were at anchor a whole fleet of boats had come out from

the shore, and their noisy occupants, dark-hued, half-naked Arabs, were clamouring as boisterously for a job as the importunate hackmen do on a steam-boat landing in New York or Philadelphia. We soon had a boat engaged, and were conveyed, with our baggage, to the shore. Immediately on landing, we proceeded to the American Hotel. This is about half a mile outside the walls of the town, on the north. It is in the midst of a settlement made by the American colony which came here several years ago to engage in agricultural pursuits. The colony, as is well known, proved an utter failure. Some of those connected with it died from the effect of sickness and want. Others, left in utter poverty, were sent home by the American consul; while a few linger here still, seeking to make out a precarious livelihood in one way or another. We found two bright, intelligent-looking American boys, about nine or ten years old, at the door of our hotel, and ascertained on inquiry that they belonged to one of the families remaining from the colony. They were eager to offer their services as guides, to take us through the town, and especially to show us "the house of Simon the tanner, which is by the seaside." We promised the little fellows to employ them when we were ready to go.

Our first object, after taking breakfast, was to make arrangements for securing a conveyance to Jerusalem. It is not always easy to do this. We should have had great difficulty in effecting it, if the providence of God had not unexpectedly come to our relief.

On a little green spot in front of the hotel there were several tents pitched. We found, on inquiry, that these belonged to a dragoman, who had just brought an English party down from Jerusalem, to embark on the steamer which had conveyed us from Egypt. They had given him

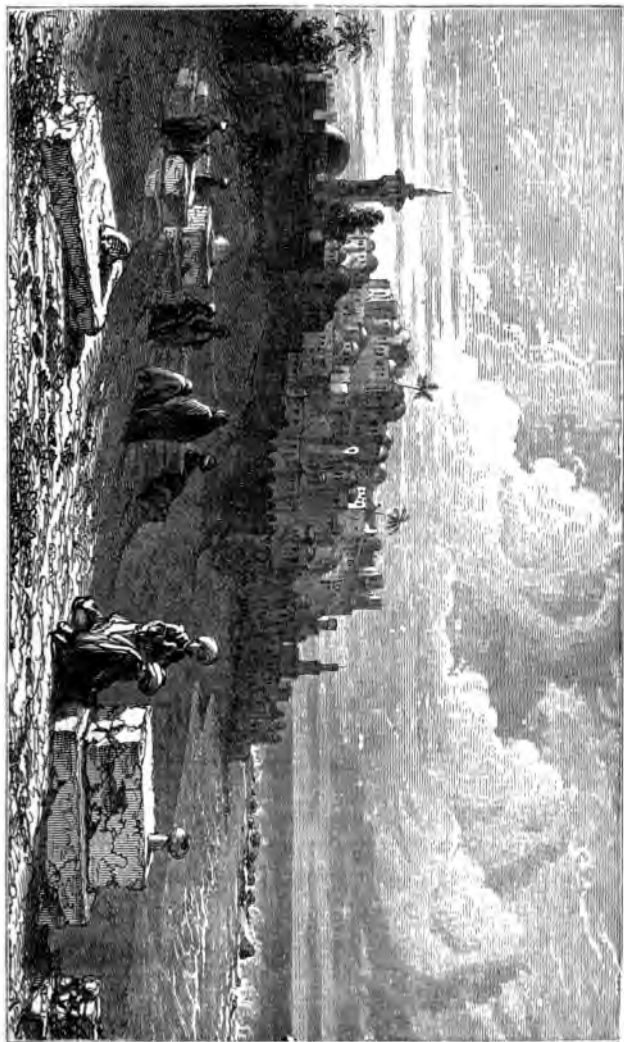
the most satisfactory testimonials, and so had other parties by whom he had been employed. His horses and mules were all on hand. His name was Ali Solomon. He offered his services as our dragoman, not only to Jerusalem, but for the whole journey before us. When satisfied of his intelligence, ability, and integrity, we concluded to engage him, if we could agree about the terms. On this point we had a long discussion, and great difficulty in coming to a conclusion that was mutually satisfactory. Finally, however, it was arranged that he should take our party of five for a journey of thirty-five days or more, at the rate of twenty-five shillings per day for each person in the party, which sum was to be inclusive of all expenses. On this basis our agreement was drawn up in writing, and signed by both parties. And here let me recommend most decidedly, to persons purposing to enter Palestine at Jaffa, that they engage a dragoman at Alexandria, or Cairo, provided they can meet with one there whose testimonials are entirely satisfactory. He can then go before, and meet them at Jaffa with his horses and mules; and thus, besides facilitating greatly the disagreeable undertaking of landing amidst such a clamorous crowd as will meet them on coming from the boat, they will be able to start on the journey without any long and vexatious delay. It is not always possible to find a good dragoman at Jaffa, and then it is difficult to get a suitable conveyance to Jerusalem. If we had not been favoured as we were in meeting with just what we needed, we might not only have been greatly delayed in starting, but also have found our ascent to Jerusalem much less comfortable and satisfactory than it proved to be.

While the dragoman was making his arrangements for our departure, we called into requisition the ser-

vices of our young American guides to take us into the town.

The engraving on the opposite page gives a good view of Jaffa, the name given to the place called Joppa in the Bible. It is the city or port that leads to Jerusalem. Most people who travel in the Holy Land enter it here. It is on the shore of the Mediterranean Sea, about thirty miles from Jerusalem. It is built on a hill or rising ground. The houses seem to stand one above another, which gives it a very pretty appearance when looked at in approaching it from the sea. But when you come near to it, you are greatly disappointed to find it very different from what you expected it to be. There are no nice, straight, clean streets in it, such as we are accustomed to see in our towns and cities. The streets are all narrow and crooked, and very dirty. The houses look so dark and filthy that you wonder how any person can bear to live in them. The streets are so steep, as they wind along the sides of the hills on which the town is built, that in walking along them you feel very much as if you were going up and down stairs. It is impossible to ride through Jaffa in a carriage of any kind. You are obliged either to go on foot or to ride on a donkey. The donkeys do not seem to mind the steep streets at all. They clamber up and down the steps in the streets as easily and as safely as though they were on a level plain.

There is only one gate in the walls of Jaffa, on the land side. A kind of market is held just outside of this gate every day. On this account, the gate is always so crowded with mules and donkeys and camels, and dirty, ragged-looking Arabs, that it is often difficult to make your way through it. When you get beyond this noisy crowd, you find that the town is surrounded by beautiful



JAFFA.

orchards and groves of olive trees, oranges, lemons, citrons, and apricots, which make the country around look like one great garden. The oranges of Jaffa, especially, are considered the finest in the country.

Jaffa contains about 5000 inhabitants. Of these 1000 are Christians, near 200 Jews, and the rest are all Turks, or Mohammedans. There is no harbour or port to this town. When steamers and other vessels stop here, they have to anchor in the open sea about half a mile from the shore. In consequence of this, it is only in fine weather that persons can land here. When the wind blows strong and the sea is rough, it is impossible for vessels to lie at anchor in safety. At such times, therefore, the steamers that sail along the coast are obliged to pass by without stopping, and go to some other port. And so it sometimes happens that the people in Jaffa will be a whole month at a time without getting any mails.

Jaffa is said to be the oldest town in the world. A well-known Roman writer tells us that it existed before the time of the Deluge; that is, more than four thousand years ago. But whether this be true or not, we know very well that Jaffa is a very old town. It is spoken of a number of times in the Bible. The first place in which we find it mentioned is Joshua xix. 46. Here, under the name of Japho, it is put down as one of the towns that were given to the tribe of Dan, as their portion of the land of Canaan. The next place in which its name occurs is 2 Chronicles ii. 16. This was when Solomon was preparing to build his splendid temple and palace. He wanted a great deal of cedar wood for this purpose. The finest cedar trees in the world grow on the mountains of Lebanon, which lie to the north of Palestine. Those mountains then belonged to Hiram, the king of Tyre. So Solomon

made a bargain with this king to send him as much cedar wood as he might need, for a price that was agreed upon. And Hiram said to him, "We will cut wood out of Lebanon, as much as thou shalt need; and we will bring it to thee in floats (or rafts) to Joppa; and thou shalt carry it up to Jerusalem."

After about five hundred years from this time,—when Solomon's temple had been destroyed,—on the return of the Jews from their captivity in Babylon, one of the first things they wanted to do was to rebuild the temple. And so, following the example of Solomon, we read in Ezra iii. 7, that the Jews "gave meat, and drink, and oil unto them of Zidon, and to them of Tyre, to bring cedar trees from Lebanon to the sea of *Joppa*," for rebuilding "the house of the Lord."

The next time we find Joppa spoken of in the Bible is in connection with the prophet Jonah. This was the place where he went on board a ship "to flee from the presence of God."

And there are two interesting incidents mentioned in the New Testament history in connection with this town of Joppa. We read the account of one of these in Acts ix. 36–43. There was a good Christian woman named Tabitha, or Dorcas, who spent her time in trying to do good in many ways, but especially in making garments for the poor. She died suddenly in the midst of her good works. Some of her friends heard that the apostle Peter was then at Lydda, a small town about ten miles from Joppa. They sent for him to come over to them, hoping that it might please God to let him restore this useful woman to life again. Peter came. He went into the room where the dead body was. He kneeled down and prayed by her side. Then he said to her, "Tabitha, arise;" and

she opened her eyes, and sat up. This took place at Joppa. The name of this good woman has been honoured, all through the Christian world, by being applied to those societies in our churches in which kind Christian ladies meet together for the purpose of making garments for the poor. And when we hear of a *Dorcas* society, we may well think of Joppa; for the first time we hear of such a society was in this very old town of Joppa.

The other incident that took place here we read about in Acts, 10th chapter. There was a good Roman soldier, a centurion, or captain of a hundred men, who was trying to serve God as well as he could. But he was not a Christian. One night God sent an angel to him, to tell him to send to Joppa and inquire for one Simon, whose surname was Peter, who would tell him what he must do to be saved. The angel told him, also, where he would find Peter. He said, "He lodgeth with one Simon a tanner, whose house is by the seaside." Cornelius sent men to Joppa at once to find Peter. But Peter was a Jew. And at that time the Jews thought it was wrong to have any intercourse with those who were not Jews. Even the Christian Jews thought that Jesus died only for their nation. They did not think it possible for the Gentiles, or people of other nations, to be saved. This was just what Peter thought and felt on this subject too. But now God was going to show him better than this. He wanted to teach him the great truth that Jesus died for all men, and that Gentiles as well as Jews might now repent and believe and be saved through Christ. About noon the next day, Peter went up to the roof of the house of Simon the tanner to pray. The houses in Palestine are all built with flat roofs, and walls around them. In warm weather the people sleep there. They sit there in the cool

of the evening. And they go there when they wish to be alone, as we go into our chambers. When Peter had done praying, he fell asleep. While he was asleep, he saw a strange vision. You can read all about this in Acts, 10th chapter. The object of the vision was to teach Peter that God wished Gentiles as well as Jews to be saved, and so to make him willing to go and preach the gospel to Cornelius and his friends. Peter learned the lesson God taught him. He went with the messengers of Cornelius. He preached Jesus to him. Cornelius believed, and was saved. This was the first time the gospel was ever preached to the Gentiles. And it is interesting to know that God prepared the way for this in Joppa.

They show what is said to be "the house of Simon the tanner," to this day. Of course I went to see it while there. It is an old-looking stone house, built on the rock near the sea. I went to "the housetop," and thought of Peter's prayer and vision, and of the blessed results that have followed from it. If you look in the picture, you will see a tower, or minaret, on the right-hand side of the town, by the sea. The house is near that. But whatever we may think of this house, we may well thank God for the vision Peter saw in Joppa, and for his great goodness in sending his Son to die for Gentiles as well as Jews.

On returning to the hotel, we found all things ready for starting.

About two o'clock in the afternoon, we mounted our horses and began our journey. Our road lay first across the level plains that surround Jaffa. These are very fertile and under high cultivation. Jaffa is famous for its oranges. They are the finest raised anywhere in this part of the world, and the extent to which they are cultivated surprised me greatly. For a long time after leaving the town,

we rode along through a constant succession of vast groves or orchards of orange trees. I never saw such a profusion of this delightful fruit. The trees were loaded with them. They hung thick upon the bending branches in every stage of growth. Here were the opening blossoms, there the young fruit just rounding into form, and there again the rich, ripe, golden fruit, ready to be gathered; and all this upon the same tree. The air was perfectly redolent with the delightful fragrance which exhaled from the blossoms. After passing out from those beautiful orange groves, the country became more undulating. The soil has a dark, rich look; and the broad fields of luxuriant grain, spread out on every hand, gave substantial and satisfactory evidence that it really *was* as rich and fertile as it appeared to be. This was the aspect of the country for miles around, while off beyond this great expanse of fertility we had charming views of the distant "hill country of Judea." The sky was beautifully clear, with masses of white fleecy clouds sailing gracefully through it. The air was cool, fresh, and balmy, and the birds were singing sweetly overhead. Nothing could have been more charming. It seemed as if the approving smiles of our covenant God were beaming around us, and bidding us welcome to the land he had chosen as specially his own. I was deeply conscious of a feeling of unwonted exhilaration. As we rode thus pleasantly along, the question would come up, "Is it a dream, or is it actually so, that the cherished desire of a lifetime is about to be realized, and I am really entering on the land of patriarchs and prophets—the land where God was 'manifest in the flesh,' and the great price of our redemption was paid down?" But it was no dream, and my heart overflowed with thankfulness to God for granting us so auspicious an entrance to the land of the Bible.

We passed in sight of Lydda, where Peter cured Eneas, and from which he was called to Joppa to restore the dead Dorcas to life and usefulness again.

The road from Jaffa to Jerusalem is very different from what I expected to find it. I supposed it to be little better than a bridle-path; and such it was formerly. But now there is a fine broad macadamized road running the whole distance. It is well adapted for wheeled carriages, but there are none found upon it. An enterprising American—one of those connected with the colony above referred to—started an omnibus some time ago, from Jaffa to Jerusalem. He went through one day, and returned the next. He was getting on finely with the undertaking, and it promised to be a complete success, when the government interfered, and would not allow him to proceed unless he would agree to give up one half of all his income. This of course stopped the enterprise; and now the only mode of conveyance for goods and merchandise between the two places is on the backs of camels, mules, and donkeys. And such is the general policy of the government, by which, in the expressive language of our Saviour, this land is “trodden down of the Gentiles.”

After a delightful ride of three hours, we reached and passed through the town of Ramleh. It contains a population of about three thousand people, but has no special Scriptural interest. It was a place of much importance during the time of the Crusades, and was the scene of some of the famous exploits of the lion-hearted Richard of England.

Outside the walls of this town we found our tents pitched. There we halted for the night, and began our experience of tent life. We found an excellent dinner of six or seven courses prepared for us. For this our ride

had given us a keen appetite. It had also given us the best possible preparation for enjoying a night of sound and sweet repose. And thus ended a day that had long been looked forward to,—a day of abounding mercy,—a day that more than realized all that anticipation had pictured round it,—a day the recollection of which will always awaken the most pleasing and grateful emotions,—*the first day in the Holy Land.*

Most travellers spend but one night on the road from Jaffa to Jerusalem. By starting in the morning, this can easily be done. But we concluded to spend another night on the road, and pitched our tents for the second night in the Valley of Ajalon, where Joshua commanded the moon to stand still, while the Israelites finished their victory over the Canaanites. This is only about an hour's ride from Jerusalem. We might have pushed on, and have arrived there before finishing the day's journey. But we preferred to get a good night's rest, and reach Jerusalem early the next day, fresh and unfatigued, and ready to begin at once our examinations of its interesting localities.

CHAPTER IV.

ARRIVAL AT JERUSALEM—FIRST IMPRESSIONS—SKETCH OF ITS HISTORY—
THE JEWS' WALLING-PLACE THE FIRST PLACE VISITED.



AN hour's ride after breakfast brought us to Jerusalem. I felt curious as to what my first impressions would be on seeing the Holy City. I am free to confess that the feeling was one of disappointment. No doubt this was due in great part to the point from which we approached it. Arriving from Jaffa, we came, of course, to the Jaffa Gate; and the view of the city presented from this point is the least impressive. Just as you reach the summit of the hill from which the city is seen, there rises up immediately before you the extensive buildings of the Russian Convent. This is outside the walls of the city, and so situated as to hide a large portion of it from the view of those approaching it from Jaffa. But it was easier to correct this impression by subsequent observation than to avoid it by a long and roundabout ride to another point of approach. Thus we reached Jerusalem, and encamped outside the Jaffa Gate.


We give a view of Jerusalem. You see it is "a city set on a hill, that cannot be hid." Indeed it is built on several hills, which are connected together by the houses in the city, and by the walls built around them.

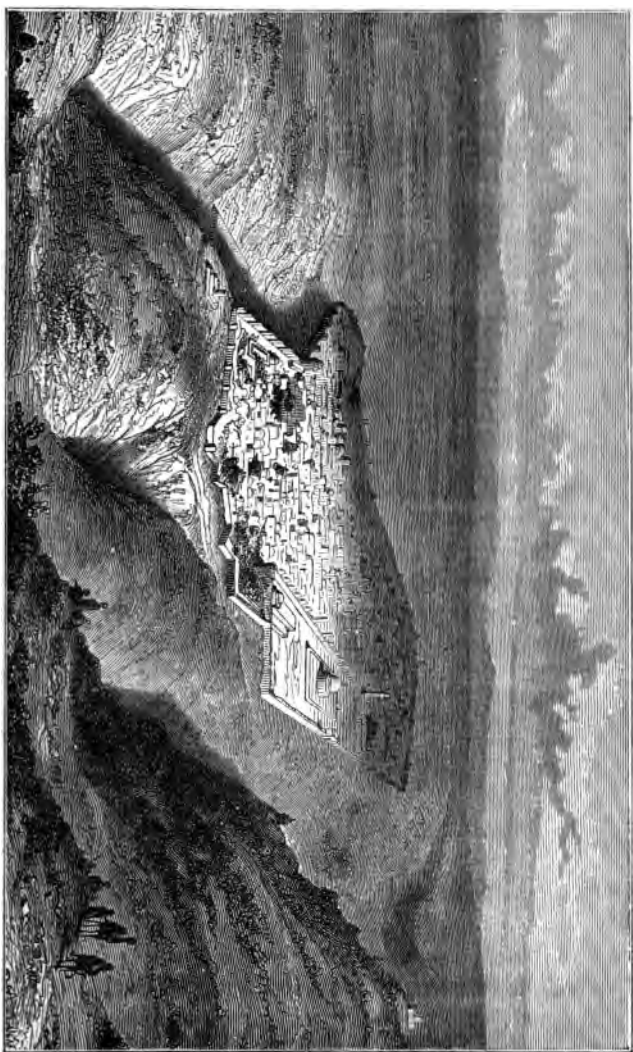
Jerusalem is the most interesting of all the cities in the world. It is not by any means the largest city or the

richest city. There are other cities that have larger and finer buildings in them, and a more fertile and beautiful country around them ; but there is no other city in the world that is so much connected with the Bible, and the wonderful things of which it tells us. And this is the great reason why those who love the Bible take so much interest in visiting this city, and why those who have never visited it love to hear and read about it. The engraving before us gives us a good view of Jerusalem, not as it appeared in the times when the Bible was written, but as it appears now.

It was not until the time of David that Jerusalem became the capital of the Jewish nation. Before that time it was called Jebus. It was a very strong place, and when the Israelites first came into the land of Canaan, they were not able to drive the Jebusites out and get possession of this post. But David was a great warrior and a very brave man. When he was made king he resolved to get possession of this place, and make it the centre, or capital, of his kingdom. How he did this you can find out by reading 1 Chronicles xi. 4-9. Then from that time, during all the rest of his life, he lived and reigned in Jerusalem ; and it was because he first took the city and lived in it that it was often called "the city of David."

When Solomon became king, he did a great deal to enlarge and beautify the city, especially by the splendid Temple which he built, all covered with gold, and which became the chief ornament and glory of Jerusalem. It is said that Solomon "made silver in Jerusalem as [plenty, or common as] stones ; and cedar trees made he as [common as] sycamore trees" (2 Chron. ix. 27). After the time of Solomon, Jerusalem continued to be the capital of the kingdom of Judah ; and all the kings of Judah lived





BIRD'S-EYE VIEW OF JERUSALEM

and reigned there for about four hundred years. Then, on account of the wickedness of the people, God permitted Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, to come against Jerusalem, and to take it. He burned the beautiful Temple which Solomon had built; he destroyed the city and broke down its walls, and left it in utter desolation. He also carried the people away captive to Babylon. Then Jerusalem lay in ruins for seventy years.

After this, God brought the Jews back from the captivity of Babylon to their own land again. He also raised up Ezra and Nehemiah, two good, pious Jews, and sent them to rebuild the city and the Temple. Another Temple was afterwards built by Herod the Great. It is said to have taken forty-six years in building (John ii. 20). It was larger and more splendid than the Temple of Solomon. The Jews were very proud of it. It was to this that the disciples called the attention of our Saviour, when they said, "Master, see what manner of stones and what buildings are here" (Mark xiii. 1). And they were greatly surprised to hear him say that that beautiful Temple should be destroyed, till there should not be left in it "one stone upon another."

But, after all, the chief thing that makes Jerusalem so interesting to us is, that it was there that Jesus spent so much of his time, teaching the people and working miracles among them; and there, above all, that he suffered that cruel death upon the cross, when he shed his precious blood for us, and so "opened the kingdom of heaven to all believers." Calvary was just outside of the walls of Jerusalem, "nigh to the city" (John xix. 20). Here, too, he was buried, and lay in the silent grave; and here it was, on the morning of the resurrection, that he gained his great victory over death and the grave, and thus made

it certain that all who love him shall rise from their graves at last, to dwell for ever with him in the glory of his heavenly kingdom. Here we see reason enough why this city should always be a very interesting place to all who love Jesus.

About forty years after the death of Jesus, a Roman army came, under the command of Titus, and besieged Jerusalem. It was too strong for them to take by force, at a time when cannon and cannon-balls were unknown. They had nothing that was powerful enough to break down the great, strong walls of Jerusalem. So they resolved to starve the Jews out, and compel them by hunger to surrender the city. They came at the time of the great feast of the Jews, when the city was very full of people. They surrounded it on every side, and built a wall all round it, to prevent any one from going in or out of the city. The Jews were very brave, and there was great fighting all round this Roman wall. But after a while provisions began to get very scarce in Jerusalem. Multitudes of the people died from hunger. Famine raged in the city, and more were killed in this way than by the swords of the Roman soldiers. That siege of Jerusalem was one of the most fearful that ever took place. It is enough to make one's blood run cold to read the terrible account that Josephus, the Jewish historian, gives of the awful sufferings of the people. In addition to the famine, a dreadful disease, called the pestilence, which no one can cure, broke out among them. The people died so fast that it was impossible to bury them, and whole houses were filled with dead bodies. These decayed and putrefied, and helped to make the pestilence worse than ever. The wretched people at last were so pressed with hunger, that horses, dogs, cats, and rats were eagerly devoured. They would gnaw pieces

of leather from old shoes ; *some mothers even roasted and ate their own children !*

And these fearful evils that came upon Jerusalem had all been foretold. If we turn to Deuteronomy xxviii. 45-57, we find the very worst things that came upon the Jews all foretold. "Moreover all these curses shall come upon thee, and shall pursue thee, and overtake thee, till thou be destroyed ; because thou hearkenedst not unto the voice of the Lord thy God.....They shall be upon thee for a sign and for a wonder, and upon thy seed for ever..... The Lord shall bring a nation against thee from far,..... a nation of fierce countenance, which shall not regard the person of the old, nor show favour to the young,..... And he shall besiege thee in all thy gates, until thy high and fenced walls come down, wherein thou trustedst..... *And the tender and delicate woman shall eat the children she hath borne, in the siege and straitness wherewith thine enemy shall distress thee in thy gates.*" And these solemn words of Moses were all fulfilled. In spite of the great bravery of the Jews, and their dreadful sufferings, they could not resist the Roman army. Jerusalem was taken ; the splendid Temple was burned ; the buildings and walls were thrown down ; and the ground on which the city stood was actually ploughed up, as God had said it should be.

After this, Jerusalem lay in its ruins for a long time. But finally it was built up again. The Turks got possession of it. Then the Christians in Europe thought it was a shame that the places made sacred by the life and death of our blessed Saviour should be in the hands of his enemies ; so they raised great armies to go and fight against the Turks. The people who joined these armies were called Crusaders, or soldiers of the Cross. Ministers preached about these Crusades ; rich people gave their

money to them ; princes left their palaces, and kings their thrones and kingdoms, to go and join in them. Bloody battles were fought, and multitudes of lives were lost. At last the Crusaders succeeded in taking Jerusalem away from the Turks. But they were not able to keep it very long. The Turks took it again. They have held it now for a long time. Jerusalem is still in the hands of the Turks. Jesus said Jerusalem should "be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled" (Luke xxi. 24). We should all pray for the time to come when Jerusalem shall no longer be "trodden down of the Gentiles;" for then the kingdom of Christ, for the coming of which we have so long been looking, will be set up in the earth. Then sin and suffering and sorrow shall cease; then the people will be all righteous; "the knowledge of the Lord" shall cover the earth "as the waters cover the sea."

"The Wailing-Place" to which our picture refers is a very interesting one to visit. Almost all persons who go to Jerusalem go to this place. We arrived at Jerusalem on a Friday. That is the best day in the week for visiting "The Wailing-Place," because more Jews go there on that day than on any other. So this was one of the very first places that we went to see.

It is a place inside the walls of Jerusalem, in which there is a part of the wall of the old Temple built by Solomon. The stones in it are very large, and very much worn away. Time has worn them much; and the people have worn them more by putting their hands on them, and leaning against them, and kissing them. The Jews come here every day, but especially on Friday. And when they look upon those old worn stones, they think of the time when their Temple stood complete in its beauty, and



THE JEWS' WAILING-PLACE.

“Solomon in all his glory” ruled over their land; and then they mourn to think that their Temple is now desolate, that their city is ruled by strangers, that their nation are still outcasts from their own land and scattered all over the earth.

But the Jews do not only wail or weep in this place;

they love to read their Bibles and offer up their prayers here. They seem to feel as if prayers offered here would be more acceptable to God, and be more sure of being heard, than if offered in any other place. But this is a mistake. The Bible teaches us that "God is no respecter of *persons*." It also teaches us that God is no respecter of *places*. Some people think that that part of a church where the minister stands or kneels, when he is praying or preaching or administering the sacraments, is more holy than the pews where the people sit. But this is a mistake. God is no more present in one place than he is in another. Prayers offered in one part of a church building are no more acceptable to God than those offered in any other part. Prayers offered in the city of Jerusalem will not be heard any sooner by God than prayers offered in the city of London, or New York, or Boston, or Philadelphia.

But the Jews think differently. They think that those old stones of the Temple will, somehow or other, make their prayers more sure of being heard. For this reason they love to go to this place. Sometimes you may see a little company of four or five people standing together. They will all have a portion of the Hebrew Bible in their hands. One of them will take the lead in reading some part of the five books of Moses—that is, the first five books of the Bible, which are also called the Pentateuch—and the rest of the company will join him in repeating something every little while. Others will stand by themselves and read, while some will lean against the wall, or put their mouths to the opening in the stones, and repeat some of the lamentations of Jeremiah, or offer their prayers in a very sad and mournful voice, while the tears at the same time are running down their cheeks. It makes one feel very sad to see it; and I almost felt as if I

could weep with them that wept in that interesting old place.

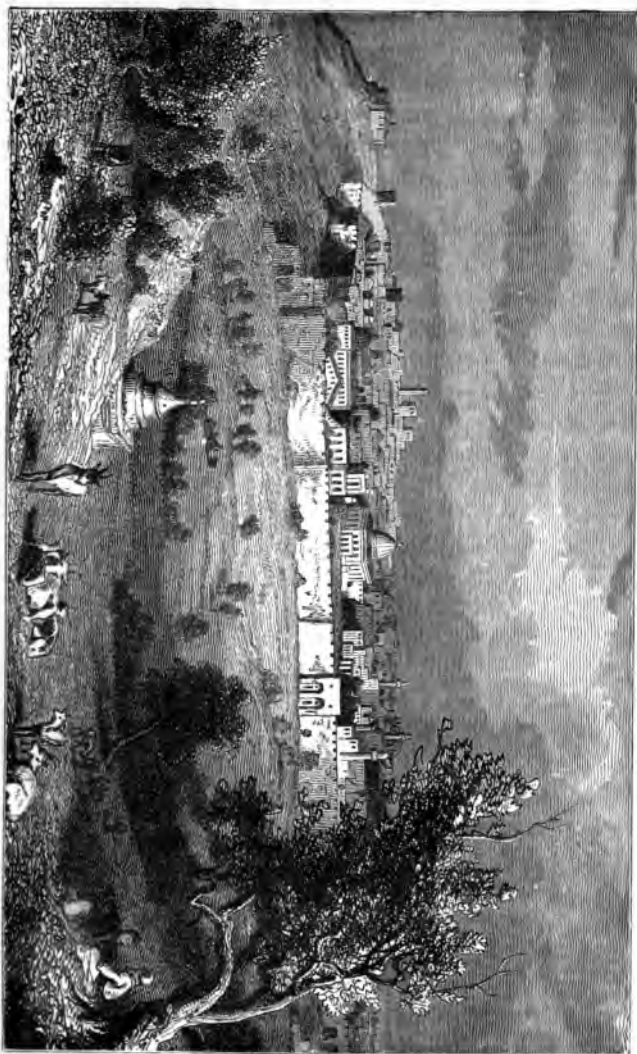
As I turned to go away, I felt that there were *two lessons* which I might learn from my visit to "The Jews' Wailing-Place," and which all may learn too who look upon the picture of it.

What a dreadful thing sin is! This is one of the lessons. It was the sin of the Jews which brought upon them all the evil that they are suffering now, and that their fathers before them have suffered for hundreds of years. The prophet Isaiah said to them: "Your iniquities have separated between you and your God; *your sins* have hid his face from you." It was sin which caused the destruction of their beautiful City and Temple. It was sin which caused them to be cast out from their own land, and to be made to wander all over the face of the earth. It is their sin which has caused them to be despised and persecuted in almost every nation. There never was a nation that has been hated and oppressed everywhere as the Jews have been. God told them beforehand that it would be so. You can read what God said about this in the 28th chapter of Deuteronomy. That is a wonderful chapter. If you could read over the history of all that the Jews have suffered during the past eighteen hundred years, you would find that it had been all foretold in that chapter. And when we think of all these sad results following from their evil doings, we may well learn this lesson—that sin is a dreadful thing.

But there is another lesson we may learn from this subject, and that is, *that the sin of neglecting Jesus is especially a dreadful thing.*

This was the great sin of the Jewish people. They neglected Jesus. He was the Messiah, or great deliverer,


JERUSALEM FROM THE MOUNT OF OLIVES



who had so long been promised to them. He came not only to be "a light to lighten the Gentiles," but also to be "the glory of his people Israel." And yet, when "He came to his own, his own received him not." They would not listen to his teaching. They refused to receive him as their Saviour. They reviled him, and persecuted him, and put him to death. And *this* was the great cause of all the trouble which has come upon them and their city. You remember on one occasion when Jesus was coming down the Mount of Olives, which commands a full view of Jerusalem, he stopped to look at it, and think of all the terrible things that he knew would happen to it in the course of a few years. And then we read that "He beheld the city, and wept over it, saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes. For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, and shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; *because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation.*" This shows us that it was neglecting Jesus which has brought upon the Jews all their troubles. Then let us take care that we do not repeat the sin of the Jews. Let us not neglect Jesus as they did. But let us listen to his voice as he speaks to us. Let us take his yoke upon us—for his yoke is easy and his burden light—and we shall find rest for our souls.

CHAPTER V.

JERUSALEM CONTINUED—THE CHURCH OF THE HOLY SEPULCHRE—THE
MOSQUE OF OMAR—THE VIA DOLOROSA—THE POOL OF BETHESDA.

N the last chapter we spoke of "The Jews' Wailing-Place" as the first place we visited in the Holy City. In this chapter I wish to speak of some of the chief places of interest within the walls of Jerusalem which were afterwards visited.

The first of these to which we give our attention is *The Church of the Holy Sepulchre*.

If we could only be sure of the identity of the localities grouped together within the limits of this great building, there is no spot on the surface of the earth that would be so truly interesting, so deeply solemn, as this. If we could only be certain that the cross on which Jesus hung "in agony and blood," when he was "made a curse for us," was really set up in the place pointed out in this Church, and that the spot where he lay, still and cold in death, was really that designated as the Holy Sepulchre, how thrilling it would be to stand and meditate there! But it is impossible to have any certainty about it. We are told by one of the sacred writers that He "suffered without the gate," and by another that the place where his crucifixion occurred "was nigh to the city." Both these statements point to a spot outside the walls of the ancient city as that where the crucifixion and burial of Jesus took place. But the Church

of the Holy Sepulchre, which covers these reputed hallowed spots, is near the very heart of the city as it now stands. It seems impossible to imagine that these localities could ever have been outside the walls of the former city. And yet there are not wanting men of learning and intelligence who find no difficulty in admitting the genuineness of these localities. The question is one that will probably never be satisfactorily settled. It is not my purpose to enter into a discussion of this much-disputed question, but simply to speak of the Church and its enclosed localities just as they exist.

The present Church is a sort of patchwork of very varied architecture. Some parts of it date back to the time of the Crusades, while other portions are of much more modern construction. In 1808 a large part of the building was destroyed by fire, but it was subsequently restored. This gives to that portion of it quite a modern aspect. It is a large irregular pile, 350 feet in length by 280 in breadth. The style of architecture is a pointed Romanesque composition, dark and heavy, yet truly picturesque. The lower story has a wide, double doorway, with detached shafts, supporting richly-sculptured architraves representing our Lord's triumphant entry into Jerusalem. Over these rise carved and richly-moulded arches. Projecting from the front of the Church, on the left hand side, stands the remnant of a massive campanile, or bell-tower, formerly of five stories high, but now reduced to three.

On entering the building, the aspect which it presents is that of gloomy grandeur. The whole interior is filled up with reputed sacred localities connected with the sufferings, death, and resurrection of our blessed Lord. Of these there are altogether about seventy. As you look round the vast enclosure, there seems to be no end to aisles,

windows, stairways, vaults, tombs, dark recesses, chapels, oratories, altars, concealed relics, and such like sacred attractions.

Some of these localities are appropriated to the exclusive use of one, and some to another, of the five bodies of Christians represented there,—namely, the Romish, the Greek, the Armenian, the Syrian, and the Coptic Churches. Others, again, are held in common by them all, and are used by each in turn.

Of course the object of chief attraction is that after which the building takes its name—the Holy Sepulchre. Externally, it is covered by a small marble house, 26 feet long by 18 broad, and pentagonal at the west end. It is cased in yellow and white stone, ornamented with slender semi-columns and pilasters, and surmounted by a dome somewhat resembling a crown. Stooping low, we enter by a narrow door, and stand within the reputed Sepulchre.

A great number of lamps of gold and silver, hung from the roof, are burning continually, and shed a brilliant light; while fragrant perfumes and sweet incense fill the air. Here the traveller lingers,—solemnized, almost awe-stricken,—gazing at pilgrim after pilgrim, in endless succession, crawling in on bended knees, pressing lips and forehead and cheeks to the cold marble, bathing it with tears, and sobbing as if the heart would break, and then dragging themselves away, still in the attitude of devotion, until the threshold is crossed again.

After examining the Sepulchre, and indulging in the thoughts and feelings naturally suggested by such an object, we turned away to look at some of the "*many inventions*" which have been found out here. There is the altar of Melchizedek; the chapel of St. John; the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea; the sweating pillar, against



INTERIOR OF CHURCH OF THE HOLY SEPULCHRE.

which Jesus is said to have leaned on the way to Calvary; the chapel of the division of the garments; and of the finding of the true cross; the place where Mary Magdalene stood; the altar of the penitent thief; the marble chair in

which St. Helena sat ; the sacred spot which marks the centre of the earth, and from under which the dust was taken out of which the body of Adam was made ; the rent in the rock whence his skull leaped out ; and so on, and so on, till we felt our hearts sicken within us to think of the depth of human credulity on the one hand, and the utter shamelessness of the priests in ministering to that credulity on the other.

I left the Church with two thoughts deeply impressed on my mind, as the result of my visit. This was one of them: *How careful God has been to discourage that feeling of veneration for shrines and sacred places which brings such multitudes from the ends of the earth to worship at the Sepulchre of Jesus.*

God has so ordered things that no amount of human learning can establish the remotest connection between any act of our Saviour's life and one of those so-called sacred places. And in this uncertainty which hangs over such localities, we see the hand of God. How easy it would have been for him to have put such a mark on these spots that there could have been no doubt about their identity ! But neither the writers of the Gospels nor the apostles in their Epistles make any reference to them by which their actual locality can be determined.

And this is just in keeping with that feature of God's dealing with his people in old times which led him to commission the angels to act as undertakers for his servant Moses, and to have his funeral conducted with so much secrecy that "no man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day." And so the grave of Melchizedek, the typical priest—of Joseph, the rejected and sold of his brethren—of Joshua, the captain and leader of the people—of David, the shepherd and king of Israel—of John the Baptist, the

forerunner of Jesus—and of Mary, the Virgin Mother, whom all nations were to call blessed—the tombs of all these have been designedly and irrecoverably concealed. And the same watchful care hid for ever the instruments of the Saviour's passion, and the exact spot where he was crucified, buried, rose again to life, and also the place from which he ascended into heaven. And no thoughtful person can visit Jerusalem, especially about Easter time, and see the eager multitudes that throng there, as if there were salvation in visiting those localities, without feeling how wise and good it was in God to efface the lines by which it would have been possible to identify satisfactorily these sacred localities.

The other thought suggested by our visit was this : *How little of the power of true religion is exhibited by the multitudes of pilgrims who make such a show of worship in connection with these reputed sacred places!* A most impressive illustration of this is seen in the presence of a body of Turkish soldiers in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, when worship is going on there, at the time of the great festivals. There they stand, with guns on their shoulders, and glittering bayonets fixed to their guns, while the Christians are at worship. And what are those soldiers there for? It is to keep the Christians from quarrelling and tearing each other to pieces between the acts of their devotion!

At the Easter festival in 1834, a fight took place in this Church which resulted in the death of 400 people. In the earlier ages of the Church, the enemies of the gospel, as they saw the strength of the tie which bound the followers of Jesus together, were forced to exclaim, "See how these Christians love one another!" As I looked on those soldiers of the false prophet, standing in a Christian

temple, to keep the professed followers of the Prince of Peace from quarrelling even in that sacred place, it seemed to me as if every glittering bayonet was silently repeating those ancient words, and saying in bitter irony, "*See how these Christians love one another!*" It is not visiting the place of Christ's birth or death that will make us any better, *but only treading in his footsteps and trying to be like him.*

THE MOSQUE OF OMAR.—This is one of the most interesting places to visit in Jerusalem, because it stands where Solomon's Temple formerly stood, and because there is none of that uncertainty about it which belongs to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.

In order to be permitted to enter this sacred place, application has to be made to the Turkish authorities, and an appointed fee to be paid. We had made these preparations the day before. Soon after breakfast, the government official appointed as our conductor appeared at our tent. He was gorgeously arrayed, and marched before us in great state, carrying a huge silver staff as his badge of office. This seemed like a very formal way of proceeding.

The gate of entrance opened before us as soon as our stately bearer of the silver mace made his appearance there. The first thing required of us on crossing the threshold was to encase our feet in huge felt slippers, that no outside dust from infidel feet might pollute the hallowed ground.

The Temple enclosure is called "The Haram." The first thing about it that strikes the observer is its great size. It contains about thirty-five acres. Its outline and boundaries are so irregular, that it is difficult to arrive at accuracy in its measurement. It is about 1500 feet on the east side, 1600 on the west, 1000 on the north, and 900 on the south

end. The central object of interest within this enclosure is, of course, the Mosque of Omar. This is a large octagonal building, of different coloured polished marble. It is about 170 feet in diameter, each of its sides being 67 feet long. There are four doors, at the opposite cardinal points. It is surmounted by a dome, sustained by four great piers,



MOSQUE OF OMAR.

and has twelve arches which rest on columns. It is supposed that it was originally a Christian church, and that it was turned into a mosque by the Turks when they got possession of Jerusalem. This mosque is believed to stand on the top of Mount Moriah, on which Abraham, as we read in the 22nd chapter of Genesis, was going to offer

up his son Isaac as a sacrifice, when the angel of the Lord called to him out of heaven, and told him not to do it.

In the centre of the mosque, directly under the dome, or the highest part of the building, is a great mass of rock, which is said to have been the top of Mount Moriah. It is left just in its natural state. The Turks are more sensible about such things than the Roman Catholics. If *they* had it, they would be most likely to cover it all over with marble, so that no one could see it, as they do with their other sacred places. But the Turks, very properly, have left it just as it was. And it is very interesting to stand there, and think, as you look at that rock, that just there, it may be, the good old patriarch stood, when he built the altar, "and laid the wood in order, and bound Isaac, and laid him on the altar, and stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son." What wonderful faith Abraham had in God!

This rock stands about six feet above the floor of the Mosque. It is irregular in form, a mass of about fifty feet by forty. The building is richly ornamented in the style of the early Christian and Moslem buildings, with gilded mosaic work covering almost the entire walls. Here and there pieces of antique marble and porphyry are let into the walls, as if to preserve them. These, and some of the columns supporting the pointed arches, are of great antiquity; and some have supposed that they may even be relics of the original Temple itself.

Both Jews and Mohammedans believe in the sacredness of this rock, and they both have many traditions connected with it. The Jews profess to believe that the ark of the covenant, built by Moses in the wilderness, and which has been lost since the time of the first captivity, is hidden away within the bosom of this rock.

The Mohammedans say that when Mohammed went to heaven he ascended from the top of this rock. They point to a mark in the side of the rock, resembling somewhat the shape of a man's foot, which they say is the impression left by the foot of the prophet when he took his flight up to heaven. And then they point to three other marks, near this, very much like the marks which a man's fingers would make if pressed upon a mass of clay; these, they affirm, are the marks of the angel Gabriel's fingers. For when Mohammed went up to heaven from this spot, the rock was going up after him, when Gabriel took hold of it and held it down; and these are the marks which his fingers left on the rock!

There can be little doubt that the great altar of burnt-offering in Solomon's Temple stood upon this rock. Directly under the rock itself is a curious chamber, enclosed and surrounded by stone walls, reaching from the floor to the under side of the rock. A hole has been drilled through this rock, from the top into the chamber beneath. In the floor of this chamber there is a well, or passage, which is said to lead down into the Valley of Kedron, beyond the limits of the Holy Place. This hole in the rock, and the well or passage from the chamber beneath, were no doubt used for the purpose of carrying away the blood of the sacrifices offered at times in such vast numbers in the Temple.

After going through the Mosque of Omar and the enclosed area of the Temple, and examining the different objects of interest above ground, we descended to the vaults beneath. These vaults extend under a considerable portion of the space enclosed by the area of the Temple. The pillars, arches, and roofs of these vaults are of the most massive character. The magnitude of the stones, and the work-

manship, as compared with the remaining monuments of Herod, seem to point to an earlier origin. They are supposed to be parts of the original foundations built by Solomon, for sustaining the Temple and the space enclosed around. One cannot fail to gaze upon these relics of the distant past with emotions of peculiar interest and awe. Ages on ages have rolled away; yet these foundations still endure, and are as immovable as at the beginning. Nor is there anything in the present physical condition of these remains to prevent them from continuing as long as the world shall last. It was the Temple of the living God, and, like the everlasting hills on which it stood, its foundations were laid for all time.

We turned away from our visit to these sacred localities with mingling emotions of subdued solemnity. There was the remembrance of the grandeur of the past, the sight of the desolation of the present, and the expectation of the glory of the future, uniting to fill the mind with thoughts and feelings not soon to be forgotten, and hardly to be called forth in any other locality.

THE VIA DOLOROSA, OR THE SORROWFUL WAY.—This is the next place in the Holy City of which I wish to speak.

The people in Jerusalem pretend that this narrow, dark street is the very one along which our blessed Saviour walked, carrying the cross on his back, when he was going from the hall of Pilate, where he had been condemned to death, to Calvary, where he was crucified. If this were true, it would be very interesting and very solemn to walk along this *sorrowful way*, and to think of the dreadful sufferings that Jesus must have borne when he went staggering under the heavy cross for us. But we know that this cannot be the way along which Jesus walked, for about forty years after the death of Jesus, a Roman army

came to Jerusalem and destroyed it. The Temple was burned. The walls of the city were overturned. The houses were all pulled down. Nothing was left of the city but a heap of ruins. Those ruins remained for hundreds of years before the city was built up again. And when it came to be rebuilt, it was impossible for anybody to tell exactly where Pilate's judgment-hall had stood, in which Jesus was condemned; and nobody could tell just where the street was along which Jesus walked to Calvary. Indeed, nobody has ever been able to tell with any certainty where Calvary itself was.

And yet the scene to which this picture refers is an interesting one, because of its *supposed* connection with the sufferings of Jesus. But having told you the reason why I believe it cannot be the real way along which Jesus carried his cross, I want to describe this way to you as it is, and to tell you what we saw when we walked along this *Sorrowful Way*.

It is a narrow, gloomy street. There are several arched passages in it. You can see one of these arches in our picture. Groups of pilgrims are often met along this street, stopping at the different sacred places on the way.

This Sorrowful Way begins at a house which is said to stand where the palace of Pilate once stood. Here, on the left, are two old arches in the wall, which are built up. In this place there used to be a long flight of white marble steps. They were called "The Holy Steps." They were said to be the very steps which led to Pilate's house, and up which Jesus is supposed to have walked. A good many years ago these steps were carried away to the city of Rome. There they have been set up in one of the principal churches. The Roman Catholics there kiss them, and climb up them on their knees, and think that this will help



THE VIA DOLOROSA.

to make them holy and good. On the opposite side of the street, here, is a church called the "Church of Crowning of Thorns." This, they say, is built on the spot where Jesus was scourged and had the crown of thorns put on his head.

A little further on there is an arch across the street. This is called the "Ecce Homo Arch." It was here, they say, that what we read of in John xix. 5 took place, where it says: "Then came Jesus forth, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. And Pilate saith unto them, Behold the man!"

Going further on, we came to a spot where they say Jesus fainted under the cross, and leaned against the wall of a house; and in one of the stones of that house is a hollow place, which they say was the impression left by his shoulder. At one place along this way they point out the *House of Dives*, in which they say the rich man lived of whom we read in our Saviour's parable in Luke xvi. 19. A stone in front of the house is pointed out as that on which Lazarus sat and begged.

Then we turned another corner, and went up a hill, and the place is pointed out where they say Jesus fell down the second time under the cross. Then we came to the *House of Saint Veronica*, where they say a good woman of that name came out and gave Jesus a handkerchief to wipe his bleeding brow. There are other stations, too, along this way; one is the spot, marked by a broken column, where it is said the soldiers compelled Simon to carry the cross, and the place where it is said that Jesus turned and said to the women who followed him weeping: "Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children." Then this way leads up to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, in which they say is the place where the cross was set up, and Jesus was crucified.

As I said before, I do not believe that any of these places are the real places where the things spoken of actually occurred. But we know that these things *did* take place. There *was* a way along which Jesus walked

from Pilate's hall to Calvary. And that was really a *Sorrowful Way*. And when we think of that way, and all that Jesus suffered for our sins as he walked along it, we may well say,—

“ O Lamb of God ! was ever *pain*,
Was ever *love* like thine ? ”

The only other place of which we shall speak in this chapter is

THE POOL OF BETHESDA.—We read about this pool in the fifth chapter of John, from the second to the ninth verses. There we are told that this pool was near the sheep-market in Jerusalem, and that it was called Bethesda. The meaning of this is, “the house of mercy.” This is a very appropriate name for such a place, because it was a place where God was pleased to show mercy to a great many people. Around this pool, we are told, there were five porches. In these there used to be always a great many sick people lying and waiting to be healed. John tells us that an angel used to go down at certain seasons and trouble the water, and the first person who went in after this troubling of the water was sure to be healed of his sickness or disease, whatever it was.

One day, when Jesus was walking by this pool, he saw a poor man lying there, who had been lame, or sick in some way, for thirty-eight years. Jesus knew how long he had waited there, and how often he had been disappointed by having somebody step in before him after the water had been troubled, and he felt a great pity for the poor man. He resolved to make him well at once, without having to wait any longer for the water. So he said to him, “ Rise, take up thy bed, and walk.” The man did so, and found himself made well in a moment.

The "Pool of Bethesda" is not much of a pool at the present day. Like the pit into which Joseph was cast by his brethren, "it is dry; there is no water in it." It is a large basin or reservoir just outside the northern wall of the enclosure within which Solomon's Temple formerly stood. Instead of water, there is nothing in the pool now but heaps of dirt or rubbish. The pool measures 360 feet in length, 130 in breadth, and 75 in depth to the bottom where the rubbish is.

If we could only know that this was the very same pool whose water the angel used to trouble, and in whose porches so many sick people used to be lying, and by which Jesus was walking when he stopped to pity and heal the lame man, how interesting it would be for us now to visit the pool, and think of Jesus, with his heart to pity and his wonderful power to heal! But there is no certainty about this. We know that Jerusalem has been utterly destroyed since then. The walls around it and the buildings within it have been levelled to the ground. They remained so for hundreds of years. And when the city came to be built up again, it would be almost impossible to find out just where many of the buildings and places stood which were known when our Saviour was on earth.

But though I could not be sure it was the same place, I yet felt a great interest in visiting what was *said* to be the "Pool of Bethesda."

And the interest of the visit lay in this, that it suggested so many pleasant thoughts of Jesus. It was pleasant to think that either there or somewhere *near* there Jesus did stand, and look with pity upon the suffering sick people that were around him. It was pleasant to think that either there or somewhere *near* there he spoke the wonderful words which made the man who had been a bedridden

cripple for thirty-eight years *well in a moment*. And then it was pleasant to think of the difference between the healing power of that old Pool of Bethesda and the wonderful "fountain for sin and for uncleanness" which Jesus himself opened on the cross.

That Pool of Bethesda could only heal at *certain seasons*, when the angel came down and troubled the water. But the fountain which Jesus has opened is able to heal and cleanse *at all times*. By day or by night, in summer or in winter, whenever people come to this fountain in the way in which the Bible directs them to come, they find it has power to make them well.

And then the Pool of Bethesda had power to cure sick people *only one at a time*. "Whosoever then first after the troubling of the waters stepped in was made whole." Then everybody had to wait till the angel came again to trouble the waters. This was a slow way of healing when there were many to be healed, and the angel probably did not come very often.

But the fountain that Jesus has opened is able to heal *as many as come* to it. On the day of Pentecost, under a single sermon that Peter preached, *three thousand* people were healed in this fountain at once. And if the number had been *thirty thousand*, or *three hundred thousand*, instead of three, it would have made no difference. This fountain is able to cleanse and heal *all* who come to it in the right way.

And again: *the power which the Pool of Bethesda once had to heal is lost now*. We cannot tell for certain where the pool is. There is no water in it, if we could tell. And if there were water in it, it would have no power to heal the sick any longer.

But the fountain which Jesus opened is as able to heal

and cleanse now as ever it was. We know where to find this fountain. Jesus says, "Look unto *me*, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth." And Paul says of him that "he is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him." And what is true of this fountain now, in this respect, will always be true of it. So that we may well say, in the language of the hymn,—

"Dear dying Lamb, thy precious blood
Shall never lose its power,
Till all the ransomed Church of God
Be saved, to sin no more."



THE POOL OF BETHESDA.

CHAPTER VI.

ROUND ABOUT JERUSALEM—THE VALLEY OF HINNOM—ISAIAH'S TREE—
THE POOL OF SILOAM—ABSAKOM'S PILLAR—THE GARDEN OF GETH-
SEMANE—THE MOUNT OF OLIVES.



LET me give an account here of an afternoon's ramble "round about Jerusalem."

Starting from our encampment by the Jaffa Gate on the western side of the city, we had an afternoon's walk before us, more full of deep and stirring interest, and taking in a greater number of places connected with the history of the Bible, than it is possible to find crowded into the same space anywhere else. I cannot stop to speak of all the interesting objects that one sees in the course of such a ramble. It would require a whole volume, instead of a single chapter, in order to do this. I can only speak of some of the principal objects found there.

Our path lay first across "the valley of Hinnom," so often mentioned in the Old Testament as the place where the sanguinary idol Moloch, "the abomination of Moab," was set up, and the degenerate Israelites "burned their sons and their daughters in the fire." The bottom of the valley is now beautiful in its cultivation, and the sides of the valley opposite to the city are filled with graves, showing how literally the words of the prophet have been fulfilled, in which he says, "they shall bury in Tophet till there be no place" (*Jer. vii. 32*). Crossing over the valley,

we passed along near "the Hill of Evil Counsel," with a ruined house upon it, said to mark the spot where Caiaphas had a house in which the chief priests took counsel together over the thirty pieces of silver—the price of his treachery—which Judas brought forth and threw down at their feet, when they resolved "to purchase therewith the potter's field to bury strangers in." It is this fact which has given to the spot its inglorious name. A little beyond this is the reputed site of Aceldama, "the field of blood," bought with "the price of blood," which Judas returned. It is a long, vaulted building of massive masonry, in front of a precipice of rock, in which is a deep, dark, gloomy-looking cave.

Going on from this, we passed by what used to be called "The King's Garden," and which is still a portion of the valley marked by the most luxuriant cultivation. At one corner of this beautiful spot is a venerable-looking mulberry tree, with a heap of stones raised around it for protection, and pillars of stone built up to support some of its larger limbs. This is called "*Isaiah's Tree*," and is said to mark the spot where that devoted and venerable servant of God was sawn asunder by the order of the wicked King Manasseh. Not far from this we came to—

"Siloa's brook, that flowed
Fast by the oracle of God."

The Pool of Siloam is a rectangular reservoir 53 feet long, 18 wide, and 19 feet deep, partly broken away at the western end. It has no fountain in itself; but at the upper end is an arched entrance to a ruinous staircase, by which we descend to the mouth of a conduit, through which a stream of water flows by an underground course from a spring further up the valley, and known as the




FOUNTAIN OF THE VIRGIN.

“Fountain of the Virgin.” We went down the steps and drank of the water. It is clear and pleasant, but not very cool. In watching the gentle course of the stream, we

were reminded of Isaiah's mention of "the waters of Shiloah that go softly," (viii. 6); and also of our Saviour's gracious command to the blind man, with the miracle of mercy that followed it, when he said, "Go, wash in the Pool of Siloam.....He went his way, therefore, and washed, and came seeing" (John ix. 7). Hastening on from this point, we passed and paused a moment to look at Absalom's Pillar.

Let us pause here and meditate on THE PILLAR OF ABSALOM, AND ITS LESSONS.—This tomb is situated in the Valley of Jehoshaphat, which lies not far from the walls of Jerusalem on the eastern side. The lower part of this tomb or monument, the part on which you see the columns and other ornaments, with a cornice or border along the top of them, has all been hewn out from one great stone. Each side is about twenty feet wide. Above this is another square part, built of different pieces of stone. The rest of it above this is round, ending in a sort of curved pyramid. The whole height is about fifty-four feet. The lower part of the tomb has been hollowed out, making a chamber inside of it. There is a door of entrance to this, above the columns. This has been much battered and broken by a practice which the Jews have long kept up. Their custom is to throw a stone at the monument and to spit at it, whenever they pass by, in order to show their dislike of the character of Absalom. A great heap of stones lies round the foot of the monument, and also on the threshold of the door or entrance to the tomb. This is the way in which they came there. I threw two stones inside of the monument, and one on the heap outside of it, and also imitated the Jewish custom of spitting at it, while I was standing near it, to show my dislike of the conduct of the bad man whose name is connected with it.



We read of Absalom that in his lifetime he, "reared up for himself a pillar, which is in the king's dale;" because he had no son (2 Sam. xviii. 18). The picture before us does not represent the pillar which Absalom built. It is not known when or by whom the monument seen in our picture was built. It is enough for us to know that Absalom's name is connected with it, and that it is treated in the way in which I have spoken.



ABSALOM'S PILLAR.

Absalom was a very handsome young man. He had a head of fine long hair, of which he was very proud. He was also very vain and selfish. He stirred up the people to engage in a rebellion against his father. The way in which he did this you can read in 2 Samuel xv. 1-13. He drove his father away from his home in Jerusalem, and tried to kill him, in order that he might be made king in his stead. But his army was defeated in battle by the

soldiers of David; and as Absalom was fleeing away from the battle-field on the back of a mule, he was caught in the branches of an oak tree; and as he was hanging there, Joab, the captain of David's army, thrust three darts through his body and killed him.

Such was the life and such the death of the bad man whose name is connected with the monument near Jerusalem which is represented in our picture. And there are several very useful lessons that we may learn from this subject.

In the first place, we see how wrong it is to be proud and vain on account of our good looks. Absalom was proud of his beauty, and this led him into the sin of rebellion. If we have health and strength and beauty, we may well feel thankful for these blessings, because they are God's gifts to us. But to be proud of them, or to think ourselves better than others on account of them, is very foolish and very sinful. It is no merit of ours if we are stronger or fairer, or better-looking than some other people. Ornaments of the mind are a great deal more valuable than those of the body. God does not care much how our bodies look, but he cares a great deal about the state of our hearts and souls. The Bible tells us that "the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit is, in the sight of God, of great price."

The second lesson we may learn from this subject is, how long a bad name lasts.

Absalom has been dead now for about three thousand years, and yet the memory of his bad conduct to his father of his disobedience and rebellion, is just as fresh as if he had only died yesterday. And it will be the same when three thousand years more have passed away. He covers his name with disgrace by his bad conduct, and now it

impossible for that disgrace to be done away. And though we may not spit out when we hear the name of Absalom, or cast stones at his monument as the Jews do, yet we cannot help feeling great disgust at the thought of his wickedness. And just so long as the name of Absalom lasts it will always be so. He put bad marks all round his name, by the sins which he committed; and now all the angels in heaven can never rub those marks out.

And what was true of Absalom will be true of us, if we follow his example. If we write anything on the sand by the seashore, it is not of much consequence, for the first wave that rolls over it will wash it all away. If we write with a pen and ink even, when we have finished we can easily draw the pen over it, if we wish, and blot it out. But if we are going to write with the point of a diamond on glass, then we ought to be very careful what we write, because the marks made on the glass cannot be rubbed out. The Bible tells us of "the book of God's remembrance." In that book he writes down all our sins. And what is written in that book will last longer than if it were engraven on stone or brass, or written with the point of a diamond. True, if we repent of our sins, the blood of Jesus Christ will blot out everything that is written in that book against us. Then if a bad name lasts so long, as we see Absalom's has done, let us be very careful what marks we put around our name.

The third lesson we may learn from this subject is, that we can never expect to prosper when we do wrong.


When Absalom began his rebellion against his father, he felt very sure of success. And it seemed very likely that it would be so, for a great many of the people joined him; and we read that "the rebellion was strong for Absalom." But you know however handsome a building looks, it is not

worth much if the foundation on which it rests is only sand. And it is just so with any work that we engage in. If we begin it by doing what is wrong, it is like building a house on the sand. No house can stand unless it have a good foundation; and no cause can prosper long that is begun in doing wrong. And so it turned out with Absalom. The first battle that was fought by his army went against him. He was defeated. His army was scattered, and he died a miserable death.

And so it will always be with those who do wrong. They may seem to prosper at first, but it will not last. The Bible tells us that "the triumphing of the wicked is short." God's blessing is necessary, if we wish to succeed in anything we attempt to do; but we cannot have this blessing when we begin by doing wrong. Let us remember this when we think of Absalom.

The last lesson I would speak of, as taught us by this subject, is that disobedient children are sure to come to a bad end.

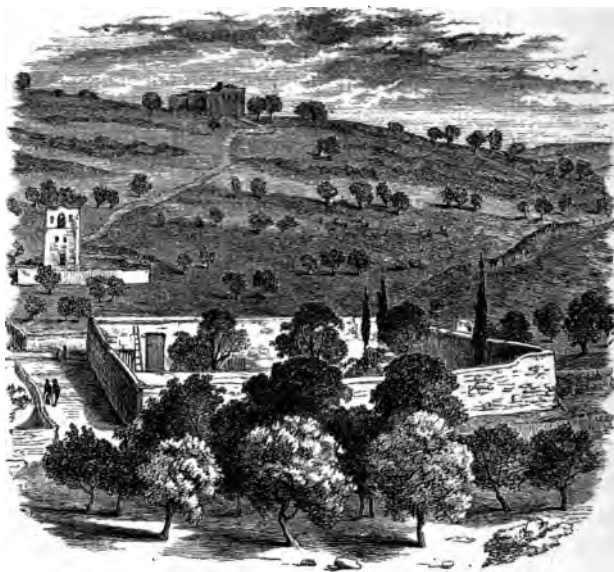
We find a very striking and solemn illustration of this lesson in the history of Samuel. You can read about it in 1st Samuel, 3rd chapter. He was a child then, ministering before the Lord in the tabernacle. Old Eli, the priest, was Samuel's friend. He was a good man; but he had two sons, Hophni and Phinehas, who, although they were priests, were disobedient to their father, and acted very wickedly before God. And "when little Samuel woke," in the tabernacle one night, "and heard his Maker's voice," it was a dreadful message that God sent to the old priest about his wicked sons. And that message was fulfilled not long after, when both those young men were killed in battle, and the ark of God was taken captive by the Philistines, and old Eli, on hearing the sad tidings, fell from his



seat, and broke his neck, and died (1 Sam. iv. 1-19). God has promised his special blessing to those who honour and obey their parents. But his displeasure will always follow and his curse will always cling to those who disobey and dishonour them. No matter whether they be the sons of priests, as in Eli's case, or of kings, as in David's case; the high office which their parents hold and the goodness which belongs to them does not prevent God's punishment from coming on their disobedient children. There is one fearful passage of Scripture on this subject that should never be forgotten by those children who feel inclined to disobey their parents. It is Proverbs xxx. 17: "*The eye that mocketh at his father, and despiseth to obey his mother, the ravens of the valley shall pick it out, and the young eagles shall eat it.*" Think of these lessons when you hear about Absalom or see the picture of his tomb.

The picture on the next page represents one of the most sacred and interesting places in the world. It is "the Garden of Gethsemane." This was the next place of interest to which we came in our ramble, after leaving Absalom's Pillar. It is a spot to which Jesus loved to go when he was on earth, and where the most solemn and painful scene in his life took place. It lies outside of Jerusalem, not far from the walls of the city, on the west side. If we walk down the hill on which the city stands, on that side, it brings us to the valley of Kedron. We cross the little stream on a stone bridge of one arch, and just on the other side of the bridge we come to another hill. This is a part of the Mount of Olives. There are trees scattered over the side of this hill. A stone wall has been built round some of these trees, as you see in the picture. This represents the Garden of Gethsemane. We do not know whether this wall includes the *very spot* to which Jesus went on the

night in which he was betrayed or not. And it does not matter much, either. We know it must have been *about* this spot. For in the beginning of the 18th chapter of John we read: "When Jesus had spoken these words, he went forth with his disciples over the brook Kedron, *where was a garden*, into the which he entered, and his disciples.



GARDEN OF GETHSEMANE.

And Judas also, which betrayed him, knew the place: *for Jesus oftentimes resorted thither with his disciples.*"

This side of the Mount of Olives is dotted over with olive trees. The Romanists have enclosed a portion of the hill-side here with stone walls, keeping the gate locked, and putting it in charge of a monk, to make money out of it by

levying a fee on every visitor. Within the enclosure a flower-garden is kept up, for the purpose of selling the flowers to those who visit the hallowed spot. There are eight large old olive trees in different parts of the garden. Beneath the shade of the most venerable of these we sat down on a mound, and read the affecting narrations which the Evangelists give of that awful passage in the history of our suffering Saviour, on the memorable night when "he trod the wine-press alone, and of the people there was none with him." There was something most solemnizing and awe-inspiring in the thought that we were standing on the very spot where Jesus reached the lowest depths of those "unknown sufferings" through which he passed in paying the price of our redemption—the very spot where "he fell to the earth, and being in an agony, he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling to the ground." I felt that it was worth a pilgrimage there just to indulge the thoughts and meditations which such a scene inspired. If you wish to know what took place there on that night, read Mark xiv. 32-52. How solemn it makes us feel just to read about that scene!

But suppose now that you and I had been in the Garden of Gethsemane on that night. And suppose that we had seen and heard all that took place there, and that we had known as much about Jesus and his death then as we know now. Well, when it was all over, and we had got back to our own rooms, and were thinking over all that we had seen, what are some of the lessons which that visit to the Garden of Gethsemane should have taught us?

The *first lesson* would be this: *How dreadful the sufferings of Jesus were!*

A great load was on him in Gethsemane. On his way there he said to his disciples, "My soul is *exceeding sorrow-*

ful, even unto death." This load of sorrow pressed on him so heavily that he was not able to stand. He sank to the earth under it. As he lay there, on the cold ground, at the hour of midnight, his sufferings were so great that they made the sweat come out in "great drops of blood," which rolled down his face to the ground. And if you ask me what caused this great suffering to Jesus, the answer is: *our sins* caused it. The Bible tells us that Jesus "made his *soul* an offering for sin." His body was crucified on the cross on Calvary; but his *soul* was crucified in the Garden of Gethsemane. His suffering here was so great that it seems as if he had been in danger of dying under it, before he was nailed to the cross; and we are told that there "appeared unto him an angel from heaven strengthening him," that he might bear it all. We cannot understand or explain what all these sufferings were. They have been well called "the *unknown* sufferings of Christ." But when we look at a picture of Gethsemane, or think about what took place there, we may well remember how dreadful the sufferings of Jesus were.

The *second lesson* which that visit to Gethsemane should have taught us would be: *How wonderful the love of Jesus is!*

When trouble comes upon us, we cannot tell beforehand what it will be. We must wait till it comes before we can understand fully what it is. But it was different with Jesus. He knew all about what his sufferings would be before they came upon him. He knew just how he would feel when that "bloody sweat" came out upon him in Gethsemane, and when they were driving the great nails through his hands and feet on the cross. Yet he was willing to bear it all; though he might have avoided it, if he had wished to do so.

When a man does wrong, and he is arrested and put in prison or condemned to be hung, he can't help himself. He is obliged to bear what is put upon him in the best way he can. But it was not so with Jesus. He was *not obliged* to suffer and die. He might have avoided it, if he had chosen to do so. But he chose to suffer. He did it freely. It was all of his own accord. And why was he so willing to suffer? It was because he loved us. He saw that we never could be happy or get to heaven unless he bore this suffering; and he loved us so much that he was willing to bear it. When we think of this we may well say:—

“ O Lamb of God ! was ever pain,
Was ever love like thine ? ”

There is nothing which shows the wonderful love of Jesus as the sufferings which he bore in Gethsemane do.

If we could have made this visit to Gethsemane, the *third* lesson we might have learned from it would be: *How differently even good people sometimes act from what we might expect !*

Peter and James and John, who were in the Garden of Gethsemane with Jesus, were three of the best of his disciples. They saw that their Master was in great trouble and sorrow. And as they knew this, it was natural for Jesus to expect them to show that they felt sorry for him, and to do all they could to try and comfort him. But instead of this, just when he was suffering most, they went fast asleep. And when he came and woke them, they did the same thing over again, at once. How strange this was !

We are apt to think that if *we* had been there, we would have acted differently. But there is no doubt that we should have done just the same. This should teach us our

own weakness, and lead us not to expect too much from other people. We are very weak and imperfect creatures ourselves, and the best of those about us are the same. And if we find them acting sometimes differently from what we might have expected, as the disciples did in the Garden of Gethsemane, we should not be too much surprised.

And then there is just *one other lesson* we might have learned from that visit to Gethsemane; and *this is—the real kindness of Jesus.*

Most people would be very much displeased if two or three of their best friends should act towards them as these disciples did towards Jesus. They would be very apt to say to those friends: "It is too bad for you to act in this way at such a time of trouble. It is really provoking. You ought to be ashamed of yourselves." But Jesus did not act in this way. He had no angry words to speak to the disciples. He simply asked this question: "What! could ye not watch with me one hour?" And then he said—oh, how kindly and tenderly!—"The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." What a gentle, loving, considerate Saviour he is! He could look straight into the hearts of the disciples, and see that it was not because they did not love him, but only because they were so tired and weary, that they fell asleep. And so he kindly made allowance for them and excused them. Let us remember this when we are tempted to feel provoked at our friends because they act differently from what we expected of them. Jesus tells us to learn of him. He has set us an example that we should "tread in the blessed steps of his most holy life." Let us try to learn this lesson which he set us in Gethsemane. And let us remember all these four lessons when we think of what took place there. We may well

look up to Jesus, and offer the prayer contained in one of the verses of that sweet hymn which says:—

“Thy fair example may we trace,
To teach us what we ought to be;
Make us, by thy transforming grace,
Dear Saviour, daily more like thee!”

THE MOUNT OF OLIVES.—Few places around Jerusalem are more interesting to the Christian visitor than this sacred mount. We made our first visit to it at the close of a Sabbath afternoon. The day had been bright and beautiful, and the sun was going down the western sky as we marched to the top of the mount. How much there is to stir the heart in the prospect spread before one in standing on that hallowed spot! There, beneath our feet, lay “the city of the great king.” Our picture is not large enough to take in the city and the famous mountain which stands near it. As you look at the picture you must think of Jerusalem as lying on the left-hand side of it, and just beneath us. The top of Olivet is the very best point from which to get a good view of Jerusalem. As you stand there, you seem to look right down upon the city. It lies at your feet spread out before you. Its walls, its houses, its churches, its towers, the great Mosque of Omar, and all that is most interesting in that holy city, are full in view.

Around that city, for a thousand years before the birth of Christ, all the principal events woven into the history of the Bible had clustered. It was to this city that David brought up the ark, amidst the gladness of the rejoicing people, from Kirjath-jearim, where it had remained from the time of its return from captivity among the Philistines. It was to this place that he so often returned in triumph from his victories over the enemies of Israel.

There it was that "Solomon in all his glory" swayed his peaceful sceptre over the nation, in the palmiest days of its history. There it was that Isaiah delivered the impassioned strains of his glorious and sublime prophesies. There it was that, in answer to the earnest prayers of the good King Hezekiah, the mighty host of Assyria was cut off by one fell stroke of the destroying angel's sword. And there it was that Jeremiah uttered his pathetic lamentations over the desolations of Zion.

One who had stood there, as we did, at the same hour of eventide, thus speaks of his impressions: "Beautiful as this view is in the morning, it is far more striking when the sun, about to sink in the west, casts a rich slanting glow along the level grassy area and marble platform of the Temple enclosure, and touches with gold the dome of the Mosque of Omar, and the light arabesque fountains with which the area is covered; while the eastern walls and the deep valley below are thrown into a dark and solemn shadow, creeping, as the orb of day sinks lower, further and further towards the summit of Olivet, irradiated with one parting gleam of roseate light, after all below is sunk in obscurity."

As you turn to the south, you see the country stretching away towards Hebron, so intimately associated with the memory of the patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and where David reigned for seven years over Judah alone. The city itself is not in sight, but the hills around it can be distinctly seen.

The view towards the east is still more striking. Glimpses of the clear water of the Dead Sea are distinctly visible. The winding course of the Jordan may be traced by the line of verdure that marks its bed. It is some ten or twelve miles distant from the summit of the mount. These



intervening miles of dreary, barren hills form the wilderness into which Jesus "was led by the Spirit," and through which he wandered during the forty days when he was tempted by the devil. Far away beyond Jordan you see the dark line of the "mountains of Moab." It was from among those mountains that the hosts of Israel emerged to make their marvellous passage of the Jordan; and it was in that range that Pisgah lay—though not visible at this distance—the mountain which Moses climbed, and where he "stood and viewed the landscape o'er."

As you stand upon the top of Olivet, it is interesting to remember that it was around the side of this mount that David, with his little band of faithful followers, went forth weeping, when he fled from Jerusalem on hearing of the rebellion of his unnatural son Absalom. It was at the top of this mount that he met his friend Hushai, and sent him back to counteract the counsels of Ahithophel; and here he had his last view of the rebellious city (2 Sam. xv. 32–37). It was a little way past the top that he encountered Ziba and the asses laden with provisions. And it was as he descended the rough road on the other side that "Shimei went along on the side of the mount over against him, and threw stones at him, and cast dust."

But, after all, it is its intimate connection with so many scenes in the history of our Saviour's life that gives to the Mount of Olives its principal charm, and makes it seem so sweetly sacred. It was from the brow of this mount that Jesus "beheld the city and wept over it," as his prophetic eye looked down through the vista of coming years, and saw the desolations that were coming upon it (Luke xix. 41). It was here he sat with his three chosen disciples, "over against the temple," when he poured into their astonished ears the wondrous words of the prophecy which

told them of the overthrow of Jerusalem, and of the sufferings, the persecutions, and final triumph of his followers (Matt. xxiv.). It was here he delivered the beautiful parables of the "ten virgins" and the "five talents," as we read in the 25th chapter of Matthew. It was on the side of this mount that the garden lay to which he "ofttimes resorted with his disciples" (John xviii. 2), and in which the amazing scene of his "agony and bloody sweat" was enacted. Here, during the closing days of his life, he was wont to retire, evening by evening, to seek rest in meditation and prayer, when weary and harassed by the labours and trials of the day. When the cup of God's wrath had been drunk, and death and the grave were conquered, it was to the top of Olivet that he once more led his disciples forth, and while in the act of blessing them, he rose majestically from the midst of them, "a cloud received him out of their sight," and he ascended to take his seat at the right hand of the throne of God.

And then, there is one event in the future that connects Olivet with Jesus in a most interesting way. When the prophet Zechariah is describing the coming again of Jesus to our world, he tells us distinctly that "his feet shall stand in that day upon the Mount of Olives" (Zech. xiv. 4). Thus this spot is connected at once with his departure and his return. When he went away from earth, this was the last place on which his feet stood; and when he comes back to our globe, it is just here that he will first alight. These are some of the thoughts which give a peculiar sacredness to this hallowed spot in our visits to it, or our recollections of it.

" Oft as the daylight hours were gone,
When friends forsook and foes beset,
The Saviour of the world, alone,
Retired to pray on Olivet.

VERSES ON MOUNT OLIVET.


"And still by faith we climb its steep,
A respite from earth's cares to find,
To hush distracting thoughts to sleep,
Amid this Sabbath of the mind.

"Oh ! may we cherish, more and more,
The shelter of this calm retreat,
And realize the bliss in store
For those who love the mercy-seat.

"When ends at last life's little day,
Its waning sun about to set,
Our souls would soar to heaven away
On wings of prayer from Olivet !"

CHAPTER VII.

FROM JERUSALEM TO THE DEAD SEA—BETHANY—THE ROAD TO JERICHO
—THE BROOK CHERITH—JERICHO—ELISHA'S FOUNTAIN—THE PLAINS
OF JERICHO—THE JORDAN—THE DEAD SEA.

HE journey from Jerusalem to Jericho is an interesting one. We started from our encampment by the Jaffa Gate in the morning, immediately after breakfast. We were provided with a guard of two rascally-looking Arabs, armed with long muskets furnished with old-fashioned flint-locks. It took us seven or eight hours to make this trip, including stoppages. Wending our way across the Mount of Olives, the first place of interest to which we came was

BETHANY.—This is one of the interesting places connected with the history of Jesus and Jerusalem. Bethany is a little village on the side of the Mount of Olives, not quite two miles from Jerusalem. It lies directly on the road that leads down from Jerusalem to Jericho. It is a poor village, containing about twenty or thirty houses. These are built of stone. The materials which compose them seem to have been the ruins of former buildings. This little village has nothing very attractive about it in itself. All the interest which travellers find in visiting it is connected with its past history. It was the home of Jesus. When he went up to Jerusalem he always stopped here, in the house of his "friend Lazarus," and of

his loving sisters Mary and Martha. When he had been teaching in the Temple all day, and labouring among the people, he used to walk over the Mount of Olives in the



BETHANY.

evening, and go to the house of Lazarus to rest himself and spend the night there.

We have an account of one of these visits in Luke x.

38-42. As he sat in the house, a number of people came in to hear him speak. Martha, the elder sister, seemed to be the housekeeper. She was anxious to get up a nice dinner for him. She wanted her younger sister, Mary, to come and help her. But Mary was sitting at the feet of Jesus, listening to his words. This was just what Jesus wanted her to do. But Martha did not like it. She was thinking only about getting the dinner ready. She came into the room where Jesus was speaking, and complained to him of Mary, saying, "Lord, dost thou not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? bid her therefore that she help me." But Jesus took Mary's part, and said: "Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things: but one thing is needful; and *Mary has chosen that good part which shall not be taken away from her.*"

Instead of finding fault with Mary, as Martha thought he would do, he gently reproved her for being so careful about household matters, and taught her that it was much better to listen to the words that he was speaking than to be thinking so much about getting nice things to eat.

It was in this same village of Bethany that all the interesting events we read about in the 11th chapter of John's Gospel took place. Lazarus, the friend of Jesus, took sick and died while Jesus was far away beyond Jordan. Jesus knew that he was sick, and he might have gone and healed him. But he stayed away on purpose till Lazarus died, because he intended to show his power by raising him from the dead. When he came back to Bethany, he found the two sisters in great distress. Martha said to him, "Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died." And she seemed to think that even then Jesus could bring him back to life. When Jesus told her that her brother would rise again, she thought that he meant at the time of

the resurrection. Then Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection." He wanted to let her know that he had power to raise the dead whenever he chose to do so. Then Jesus went with the sorrowing sisters to the grave of their dear dead brother. And when he saw them weeping, and their friends all weeping around them, his tender, loving heart was filled with sorrow for them. As he stood by the grave of his friend, in the midst of that sorrowing company, we read these two touching words: "*Jesus wept.*" Then he ordered them to take away the stone from the mouth of the grave, and the voice of Jesus was heard ringing through the silent tomb, as he said: "*Lazarus, come forth!*" That wonderful voice brought the dead man back to life. In a moment the body that was as cold as ice grew warm again. The heart that had been still for four days began to beat once more, and Lazarus came forth from the grave alive and well. What a happy family that was in Bethany that night! And how full of love and gratitude to Jesus the hearts of those glad sisters must have been! Their tears of sorrow were turned into tears of joy. And when they sat down to their evening meal at the close of that day, with their beloved brother Lazarus sitting in his own place once more, and Jesus sitting by him, what a sweet season they must have had together!

We went of course to the reputed house and tomb of Lazarus. The latter is a deep vault, partly excavated in the rock and partly lined with masonry. The entrance is low, and opens on a long, winding, half-ruinous staircase leading down to a small chamber, and from this a few steps more lead down to another smaller vault, in which the body is supposed to have lain.

But whether this be the exact spot where Lazarus was buried or not, it is impossible to visit Bethany without

feeling that it was here that the touching incident occurred which is given with such sweet simplicity, by which the real humanity of Jesus was demonstrated, and the deep and tender sympathy of his loving heart with the sorrows of his people was drawn out, as on no other occasion. It was here, as he stood beside the grave of his "friend Lazarus" with the weeping sisters before him, that "Jesus wept;" when he proved himself the resurrection and the life, as at the mouth of that silent tomb he proclaimed those majestic words: "Lazarus, come forth!" The grim tyrant of the charnel-house heard that summons, and was compelled to obey it, for "he that was dead came forth." What a glorious pledge and prophecy this was of a coming time, "when all that are in their graves shall hear the voice of the Son of man, and shall come forth!"

And then I thought, while lingering in this village, how signally favoured that family of Bethany must have been to whose bosom Jesus was wont to retire for rest when his daily course of exhausting toil in Jerusalem was over; at whose hospitable board he often sat, a welcome guest, and under whose friendly roof he was accustomed to lie down and seek refreshment for his weary frame. Their privilege it was to "entertain," not "an angel unawares," but the Lord of angels, with the knowledge that he was such.

How blessed the seasons must have been, indeed, when they sat around their board and listened to "the gracious words" that fell from his blessed lips! Doubtless they must often have realized the truth of Montgomery's lines about "the poor wayfaring man of grief," when he says:—

"We gave him all; he blessed it, brake,
And ate,—but gave us part again:
Ours was an angel's portion then,
For while we fed with eager haste,
That bread was manna to our taste."

But though we may not look for the *bodily presence* of Jesus in our *homes*, it is yet our privilege to hope for his *spiritual presence* in our *hearts*. Jesus says to us: "Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him" (Rev. iii. 20). And thus all that really made the presence of Jesus precious to the family at Bethany, we may have realized in our own personal experience. The presence of Jesus will make a Bethany of every place.

" ' Jesus wept ! '—those tears are over,
But his heart is still the same;
Kinsman, Friend, and Elder Brother
Is his everlasting name.
Saviour, who can love like Thee,
Gracious One of Bethany?

" When the pangs of trial seize us,
When the waves of sorrow roll,
Let us lay our heads on Jesus—
Pillow of the troubled soul.
Surely none can feel like Thee,
Weeping One of Bethany!

" ' Jesus wept ! '—and still in glory
He can mark each mourner's tear,
Loving to retrace the story
Of the hearts he solaced here.
Lord! when I am called to die,
Let me think of Bethany!

" ' Jesus wept ! '—that tear of sorrow
Is a legacy of love:
Yesterday, to-day, to-morrow,
He the same doth ever prove.
Thou art all in all to me,
Living One of Bethany!"

Leaving Bethany, we plunged at once into the gloomy wilderness of Judea. As one has well said, "The road soon becomes dreary enough, running among white desolate hills and wild rugged valleys, without a tree or shrub, or even a green grass-tuft. It would be almost insupportable were it not for the associations and a certain spice of danger—just enough to keep up the attention. Here and

there the gleam of a matchlock catches the eye behind some projecting rock, or a tufted spear is seen winding suspiciously round the shoulder of a hill."

The road is a mere bridle-path, now running through the dry bed of mountain torrents, then winding round the sides of the mountain and skirting along the edge of dizzy precipices. It is only roamed over by wandering Arabs; and unprotected travellers are sure to fall "among thieves," as happened to "a certain man" who "went down from Jerusalem to Jericho" in the days of our Saviour's personal ministry. We had no experience of this kind ourselves. But the very next day an English party, consisting of two gentlemen and a lady, going over the same ground, were attacked by Arab thieves, "who stripped them" of all they had, but varied the ancient performance by *not* "wounding them and leaving them half dead." This party had a guard, as we had; but those brave defenders, the moment the attack was made, ran away and kept out of sight till the robbers had taken all they could get and had disappeared. Some time after, when the plundered party had resumed their journey, they met their valiant guard returning to give them the benefit of their protection again. On being reproached for their base desertion, they said they "had only gone to Jericho to try and get more help!"

These Arabs are a cowardly set of fellows. They stand in mortal terror of a revolver. As illustrative of this, I heard a good story of a brave-hearted American missionary, who was on a visit to Jerusalem. He made up his mind to go down to Jericho alone. In one of the wildest parts of the road he was suddenly set upon by a company of six Arabs, who stood round with their muskets pointing at him. Their leader motioned to him to deliver up his watch and money. He put his hand in his coat pocket, as they

supposed to take out his pocket-book. Instead of this, however, he drew forth a revolver with six charges. He held it before the leader, and pointing with his finger to let him know that there was one ball for him and one for each of the others in his band, he then looked him steadily in the eye for a few seconds, when they all quailed before him, and, skulking away, left him to pursue his journey without further molestation.

We stopped at noon to rest and lunch at the ruins of an old khan, once perchance an inn like that to which "the good Samaritan" took his wounded "neighbour," where he left him in charge of "the host."

One of the most interesting points connected with this journey is the view it affords of "the brook Cherith," where the prophet Elijah was fed by ravens while the famine raged throughout the coasts of Israel, as we read in 1 Kings xvii. 1-7. I had always pictured to myself a solitary shady glen as the scene of that remarkable incident in the prophet's experience. There my fancy had been wont to locate the man of God in his loneliness, seated beneath a sheltering tree on the pleasant bank of some murmuring brook. But how different from all this was the actual reality, as verified by the scene here presented! In the very wildest part of this wild region is a deep mountain gorge. On the opposite side of the gorge from where we stood the mountain rose up, almost perpendicularly, for hundreds of feet. We approached the edge of the ravine and looked down. What a scene is there presented to the eye! Rugged, grand, gloomy, awful, it seemed like a fit hiding-place for such a prophet as Elijah, and must have been in striking harmony with the majestic sternness of his character. It was enough to make one's head dizzy to gaze down that appalling mountain chasm.

The sides are almost sheer precipices of naked rock, occasionally pierced by grottoes apparently inaccessible to anything except the eagles that hover around them. And far down at the bottom of this ravine is a little thread of green skirting along where the brook flows by. And there it was that Elijah was hidden, while Ahab in his rage was seeking him through all the coasts of Israel and among all the neighbouring nations.

After gazing on that gloomy scene, I went on my way, furnished with a profitable theme for meditation. One thought suggested by it was this :—

How easily God can hide his people, and how safe they are when he hides them ! Here was Elijah dwelling for months but a short distance from the very capital of the kingdom, and yet so completely covered by God's sheltering wing that all the zeal and resources of his royal enemy failed entirely to find him. How true it is that "the beloved of the Lord shall dwell in *safety* by him !"

And in connection with this came another thought :—

How easily God can provide for the wants of his people when he thus hides them ! If we had looked down into that wild gorge, and had been told that God was going to hide Elijah there for months, we might have said, "Very good, indeed, as a *hiding*-place. The prophet will be safe enough there. No one would ever think of looking for a human being in such a place of unrelieved desolation. But how can he *live* there?" To *us* this would have been an insuperable difficulty. But to our covenant God nothing is difficult. Almighty in power and infinite in resources, he never can be at a loss to carry out his purposes. Look at the ravens at Cherith bringing food to Elijah morning by morning and evening by evening, and what a striking illustration we have of that sweet promise, "My God shall

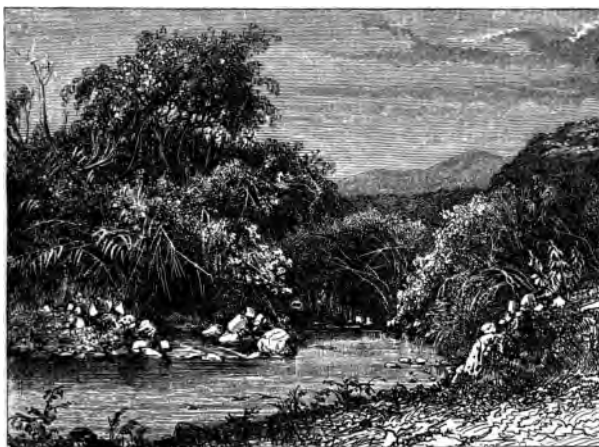
supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus."

JERICHO AND THE FOUNTAIN OF ELISHA.—When God sent the prophet Elijah to the gloomy hiding-place which we have just described, he spoke of it as "the brook Cherith, that is *before Jordan*" (1 Kings xvii. 3). The significance of this last clause is not likely to occur to one who has never visited the spot. That brook in the wild and desolate mountain gorge with which it is connected is the last point of interest in that dreary region, just "before" descending from the hill country to come down on the broad plain that surrounds the site of the ancient Jericho, and through the midst of which the Jordan rolls its turbid waters.

On coming out on this plain, its fertility presented a very pleasing and striking contrast to the stern desolation of the wild mountain region through which we had been journeying since we left Jerusalem in the morning. By the latter part of the afternoon we reached our tents, which had been pitched on the site of the ancient Jericho. Around us were extensive mounds, which are said to cover the ruins of that famous city.

After resting a while from our long hot ride of seven or eight hours, we went to visit the famous fountain now called Ain es Sultan (the Fountain of the Sultan), but formerly known as "the Fountain of Elisha." It was but a stone's throw from our tent. It is a spot full of interest to lovers of the Bible, on account of its connection with the history of the great and good prophet on whom the mantle of the ascended Elijah fell. We read in 2 Kings ii. 19-22, that Elisha returned to Jericho after his master had been taken from him. "And the men of the city said unto him, Behold, the situation of this city is pleasant, as my lord

seeth; but the water is naught, and the ground barren. And he said, Bring me a new cruse, and put salt therein. And they brought it to him. And he went forth unto the spring of the waters, and cast the salt in there, and said, Thus saith the Lord, I have healed these waters; there shall not be from thence any more death or barren land. So the waters were healed unto this day, according to the saying of Elisha."



AIN ES SULTAN, OR FOUNTAIN OF ELISHA.

This was the spring near which we were encamped, and which we had come to visit. The fountain gushes forth in great volume from the base of a mass of perpendicular rock. The water is clear as crystal, and deliciously sweet. We drank freely of it, and were ready to bear our testimony to the truth of the sacred writer's affirmation that "the waters were healed *unto this day*." This first beneficent miracle of the prophet, so beautifully illustrative of the character

of the ministry he was to exercise for Israel, was an effectual miracle, and the blessing it left behind him has been enduring. A stream of water, twelve or fifteen inches deep and six or eight feet wide, issues from that fountain, and goes dashing along over a beautiful pebbly bed. We had now travelled across the breadth of the land from Jaffa to Jerusalem and from Jerusalem to Jericho, and this was the first time that the sound of running water had greeted our ears. There was music in the sound, and we listened to it with great delight. The banks of the little stream are curtained with bushes. The luxury of a bath after our hot, dusty ride was too great to be resisted, and so, while waiting for dinner, we undressed and lay down on the smooth stones of the brook, and its clear babbling waters rolled over our weary limbs most refreshingly. And as we did so, we blessed the good prophet for the waters he had healed.

After dinner we were sitting in the door of our tent, like the patriarch of old, "in the cool of the day," when a company of Arabs, twelve or fifteen in number, arranged themselves in front of us, and went through a sort of dance peculiar to those wandering tribes. Their leader had an old sword in his hand, to the motions of which they kept time. They went through a variety of queer evolutions, accompanied by a joint recitation of strange guttural sounds. It is one of the customs of the place kept up for the purpose of extorting "backsheesh" from visitors. But as they would be very likely to levy toll in some less agreeable way if this were denied them, we thought it best to give them what our dragoman told us was the customary fee for their performance.

In a tent not far from ours was an elderly English clergyman, a very eccentric character, whom we had met

on the way down from Jerusalem. After finishing their entertainment for us, our Arab visitors went over to our friend's tent, to go through a similar performance there. We were greatly amused at the way in which the old gentleman received them. Just as they were beginning to go through their evolutions, he came to the door of his tent, and, as though they understood English as well as Arabic, he made them a little speech in his own mother tongue to this effect: "My friends, I wish you to understand before you proceed any further that I have no money to spare for the encouragement of any such performance as this. I am sorry to see so many strong, able-bodied men spending their time and energies in such a useless way. I would like to tell you the story of the good Samaritan, if I thought you would understand me. I wish you good health, but I have no money to give you. Farewell." Then he went into the tent and closed the door, to the great chagrin of the disappointed Arabs.

The next morning we wandered over the great mounds around our encampment, formed, doubtless, by the ruins of Jericho. How full of interesting and stirring associations was the whole scene around us! In full view to the west of us rose up the lofty mountain of Quarantania, the traditional scene of our Saviour's temptation; itself supposed to be the "exceeding high mountain" from whose summit the tempter "showed him all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them." A huge mass of white, naked rock, it rises abruptly from the verdant plain. Its summit is crowned by a little chapel, and its rugged sides are dotted with the dark openings of caves and grottoes, formerly the abode of hermits, drawn thither by the supposed sanctity of that desolate region.

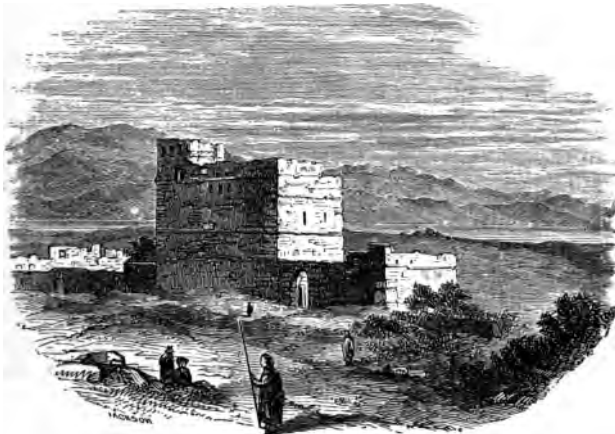
All around us was the great plain on which the weary

Israelites looked down from the mountains of Moab, after their long journey through the wilderness. On this plain they encamped as they emerged from the bed of the Jordan, miraculously dried up that they might pass over. Where our tents were pitched stood Jericho, "straitly shut up," for fear of the invaders. Around this city the Israelites marched mysteriously for seven days; and on the seventh day, after the seventh circuit, "the priests blew with their trumpets and the people shouted with a great shout," and "the wall fell down flat, and the people went up and took the city."

It was from Jericho, too, that Elijah and Elisha went forth over the plain on their way to the scene of the translation. And it was yonder, on the plain beyond the river, that the chariot of the skies came down, "and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven." What themes for meditation these incidents suggest to the traveller among the ruins of Jericho!

On the opposite page we have a picture of Jericho. As you look at it you will perhaps say, "This is not a very interesting picture to look at." And this is true. Some places are interesting because they look so beautiful. Others are interesting not so much for the beauty that we see in them as for the important events that have taken place in connection with them. It is not so much for their appearance as for their history that we want to visit them and look at them. And this is the case with Jericho, that we see in our picture. There is no beauty in it. It looks very dreary and desolate. And yet it is a very interesting place to visit. But all this interest grows out of the things which have taken place there, and of which we read in the Bible. There is a poor little village with some mud huts near where Jericho is supposed to have stood.

Many thoughts were suggested by our visit to Jericho. I will only refer now to one of them. While drinking at Elisha's fountain, I thought: *How long the benefit of one good deed may last!* Elisha was doing a good deed when he healed the water of that spring near Jericho. It is nearly three thousand years since this was done, and yet through all those years the influence of that good deed has reached, and every traveller who visits Jericho feels it still, as we did. And so, when we try to do good by teaching some one to love Jesus, it is like opening a spring



SITE OF JERICO (THE DEAD SEA IN THE DISTANCE).

in the desert, or healing a spring whose waters were bitter. And long after we are dead and gone, the spring that we opened or healed may go on flowing and doing good. Then let us work for Jesus. Every good book given away or every new Sunday-school opened may be like a spring sending forth the water of life. Let us do all we can to open such springs.

THE JORDAN.—Here is a view of that sacred river about which we read so much in the Bible. It is a very small river compared with our Hudson or Ohio or Mississippi rivers. It is not more than about two hundred miles long, and from fifty to a hundred feet wide. It rises in several springs that are fed by the melting snow on the Lebanon mountains, in the northern part of the land, and flows into the Dead Sea. It is a muddy stream, that rolls along in a narrow bed between steep banks. There are many other rivers in the world that are longer and broader, and deeper and clearer. There are many that flow through countries more fertile and beautiful than that through which the Jordan flows. But still there is no other river in the world so interesting as this, because there is no other river so closely connected with the history of the Bible; and it is this which will always make the Jordan such an interesting river to all who have the opportunity of visiting it.

It was in the month of March when we made our visit to the Jordan. Starting from Jericho after breakfast one morning, a ride of about an hour and a half over the plain that lies around the ruins of Jericho brought us to the banks of this river of the Bible. We came to the Jordan at the place which our picture represents. This is the part of the river that is most frequently visited. It is here that the pilgrims who go up to Jerusalem from all parts of the world come down to see the river. The banks of the river are not steep here, as they are in most other places, but slope down gradually to the edge of the water. You can go in some distance before getting out of depth. There is not much current here either, so that it is easy to bathe; but in the middle of the stream the current is quite strong.



THE RIVER JORDAN.

In visiting this river, as you sit down on its banks and think about the past, you cannot help feeling very much interested in some of the things which have taken place here. It was probably somewhere near the spot which our picture represents that the Israelites crossed over the river on their way from Egypt. That must have been a wonderful sight. They had a great army of six hundred thousand men. They were a nation of five or six millions of people. There were more people among them than there are inhabitants in the great city of London. They had no bridge of boats by which to get over the river. It was overflowing its banks at that time. The people formed into a procession and marched in regular order. God told Joshua to let the priests go before them, carrying the beautiful golden ark on their shoulders. They did so. With the priests at their head they began to march, and kept right on as if they were going to plunge into the river. But as soon as the priests' feet had touched the water, a wonderful thing took place. The river stopped at once. The waters on one side rose and stood upright like a wall of ice or glass. The waters on the other side rolled away towards the Dead Sea, and the bed of the river was left empty, and the people passed over and took possession of the land which God had promised them.

It was about this same place, no doubt, that David passed over Jordan when he was fleeing from his wicked son Absalom, who had risen up in rebellion against his father. But David, we are told, had a ferry-boat to take him over. (2 Sam. xix. 18.) This is the only time that a ferry-boat is mentioned in the Bible.

Here, too, Elijah crossed the Jordan when he was going up to heaven. There was no ferry-boat waiting for him. So when he came to the brink of the river he took his

mantle and smote the waters, and they opened up a passage across the river for him, just as they had done for the Israelites before.

It was here also, no doubt, or not far from this spot, that Naaman, the great Syrian captain, who was a leper, came and dipped himself seven times in Jordan and was cured of his leprosy.

The Jordan has nothing to make it specially attractive beyond the historical associations connected with it. But as the stream that is woven in so freely with the thread of the Bible narrative, it will always retain the place it has held so long in the estimation of Christians who visit the Holy Land. It is the only river of any importance in all that part of the country which the Jews occupied. And yet there is a great deal of truth in the description which one has thus given of it :—

“For all practical purposes to which a river is ordinarily applied, the Jordan is useless: so rapid, that its course is to a great extent a continued cataract; so crooked, that in the whole of its lower and main course it has hardly half a mile straight; so broken with rapids and other impediments, that no boat can swim for more than the same distance continuously; so deep below the surface of the adjacent country, that it is invisible, and can only be approached with difficulty; resolutely refusing all communication with the ocean, and ending in a lake, the peculiar conditions of which render navigation impossible. With all these characteristics, the Jordan, in any sense we attach to the word ‘river,’ is no river at all. Alike useless for irrigation and navigation, it is in fact what its Arabic name signifies, nothing but a ‘great watering-place.’”

The plain of Jericho, owing to the want of culture and

the neglect of irrigation, has lost very greatly its former fertility. We found the ride across hot and uninteresting, and were not sorry when we reached the banks of the sacred stream, and got our first view of its rapidly-flowing waters, which are invisible till that position is gained. The banks of the river are fringed with broad belts of tamarisk, oleander, and willow trees, among which reeds and underwood spring up so as to form impenetrable jungles. These offer secure dens for the wild boar and the leopard, and from these in former times, as the prophet says, "the lion would come up from the swellings of Jordan."

But more interesting still than anything else connected with this river is the fact that here the *baptism of our Saviour* took place. The exact locality is not stated by the sacred historians. All we know is, that "John came preaching in the wilderness of Judea," and Jesus came "from Galilee to Jordan, unto John, to be baptized of him." It must have been somewhere in this neighbourhood, on the confines of the wilderness of Judea, that the baptism of Jesus took place, and it was no doubt near the spot where the river had thrice been miraculously divided. But we know it was in the waters of the Jordan that the Son of God was baptized, and this fact must ever impart to that river a sacred interest such as never has been and never can be possessed by any other in the world.

THE DEAD SEA.—Every lover of the Bible feels a great interest in this sea. The deep mystery of its early history, the fearful scene of judgment that once took place in connection with it, the many fabulous stories that have found currency respecting it, the desolation and gloom that everywhere surround it, and the problems that remain yet unsolved in reference to it, all combine to make one's visit to it an event to be well remembered.

On leaving the banks of the Jordan, we mounted our horses and rode across the plain to reach the shores of this remarkable sea. The ride occupied us about an hour and a half. There was very little air stirring, and the beams of the sun poured down with great violence, making the excursion very hot and uncomfortable. This part of the plain is very barren and desolate. The ground is covered with an incrustation of salt, and the whole aspect of it is dreary in the extreme.

At last we reached the shores of the "Dead Sea." What a strange name this is! But as you stand on the shore of the sea and look at it, you see it to be a very proper name for it. There are two things about it which show how well it deserves this name. One of these is the want of life *around* it; the other is the want of life *within* it. I want to speak a little about both of these things. But before doing this, it may be well to say something about the situation and size of this sea.

The Dead Sea is situated in the southern part of the Holy Land. It is into this sea that the River Jordan flows and empties all its waters. This name is not used in the Bible, but what we now call the Dead Sea is spoken of there as the *Salt* Sea. The water of this sea is very clear. When we came from the River Jordan opposite Jericho to the pebbly beach of this sea, I was surprised to find how beautifully clear its water was. As we walked along the shore we could see anything at the bottom of the water to a very great distance from where we stood.

The Dead Sea is quite a small body of water compared to the ocean and other collections of water that we are accustomed to speak of as seas. It is not more than forty or fifty miles long, and about eight or ten miles wide. It is only about fifty or sixty miles distant from the Medi-

terranean Sea, and yet the water in the Dead Sea is thirteen hundred feet below the level of the Mediterranean.

But now it is time to speak of the two reasons for calling this the Dead Sea. One of these reasons, I said, was the want of life *around* this sea. Everything around it is desolate and dreary. There is a range of mountains on the eastern side of this sea, which are spoken of in the Bible as "the mountains of Moab." And there is another on the western side in that part of the country which is spoken of in the Bible as "the wilderness of Judea." These mountains shut it in all round. And there is nothing growing on these mountains. No trees or shrubs or grass appear anywhere. As you stand on the shore of this sea and look around, everything is as gloomy and barren as can be. The air, too, that hangs over the sea is thick and heavy, and this helps to make it look more gloomy still. It seems as if nothing was living and nothing growing all round this sheet of water. It looks like the home of death. Life in every form seems to have been driven away, and the *Dead* Sea is just the most proper name that could have been given to it. It is well called the *Dead* Sea, because death seems to reign all around it.

The other reason why this name is given to it is because of the want of life *within* it. Death is there, too, as well as all around it. You know that the water of the ocean is full of life. From the great whales which play about in its depths, down to the tiny little creature that we cannot see without a microscope, all have their home there. And so it is with our lakes and rivers and ponds. They are all filled with a great variety of creatures that God has made to spend their lives there. If you take a single drop of water from the pond by the roadside, covered over with a



THE DEAD SEA.

MARTEL & CO.

green scum, and look at it through a microscope, it looks like a world full of living things.

But it is very different with the water in the Dead Sea. No living thing is ever found in this water. It is so salt and bitter that nothing can live in it. There are fish living in the River Jordan, and as its water is rolled into this sea, of course the fish are carried with it. But the water kills them, and their dead bodies are seen floating on the surface of the sea. And this shows us how proper it is to call this the *Dead Sea*.

There is so much salt in the water of this sea, that it is said if you throw salt into it, it won't dissolve. And you know that salt water is heavier than fresh water. And the heavier water is, the easier it is for things to float in it. This is the reason why it is so much easier to swim in the salt water of the ocean than in the fresh water of our lakes and rivers. But the water of the Dead Sea is so very salt that it is hard to make things sink in it. An egg, that would sink to the bottom in fresh water, will float on the surface of this water like a cork. Persons who don't know how to swim, when they go into this water to bathe, find themselves floating on the top of it, just as if they had life-preservers on. This would be a grand place for boys to learn to swim, if it were not that, owing to the great saltness of the water, it leaves a very disagreeable feeling on the skin after you come out.

Commander Lynch, of the United States Expedition, after bathing here, says: "With great difficulty I kept my feet down; and when I lay upon my back, and, drawing up my knees, placed my hands on them, I rolled over. Two fresh hen's eggs, that would have sunk in the water of the Atlantic, floated with one-third of their length out of water. A large muscular man floated nearly breast-high

without the least exertion." Dr. Robinson says that "though he could never swim before, either in fresh or salt water, yet here he could sit, stand, lie, or swim without difficulty."

Nothing can exceed the contrast between the dreariness that now marks the whole region round this sea and the fertility which characterized it before the destruction of Sodom.

We read in Genesis xiii. 10 that "all the plain of Jordan was well watered everywhere, before the Lord destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, even as the garden of the Lord."

Dr. Thomson has the following theory on this subject: "The River Jordan begins in the valleys of Hermon, and terminates in this sea; and it is my opinion that until the destruction of Sodom this was a fresh-water lake, and that its character was changed at that time by the obtrusion from below of rock-salt and other volcanic products, which have rendered it so extremely bitter and nauseous. The evidences of such action and obtrusion are to be seen in the ridge of rock-salt at the south end of the lake, and in the presence of naphtha and bitumen in its waters. The lake was originally shorter by the length of the plains on which Sodom and Gomorrah stood. This southern plain, I suppose, was actually flooded when the annual freshet of the river raised the water in the lake, just as Egypt is flooded by the Nile. We have only to suppose that the inhabitants knew how to control the rising of the lake by embankments, as the Egyptians did the Nile, and the whole mystery about the former fertility of the plain is accounted for. It seems evident that if this had been a salt sea then, the whole territories about those cities must have been as blasted and barren as are the desolate shores


at present, which would be in flat contradiction of the statement in Genesis."

This is an ingenious theory, and I see no difficulty in the way of admitting it. Certain it is, that whole region in its dreariness seems to have been left by God as a standing monument of the blighting influence of sin.

Who can think of the luxuriance which marked that region once, and of the horrible desolation stamped on it now, without seeing a startling illustration of the Psalmist's words when he speaks of God as "making a fruitful land barren for the wickedness of them that dwell therein"?

CHAPTER VIII.

FROM THE DEAD SEA TO JERUSALEM—THE WILDERNESS OF JUDEA—THE
CONVENT OF MAR SABA—BETHLEHEM—THE POOLS OF SOLOMON—
HEBRON AND ABRAHAM'S OAK.

FTER lingering on the shores of the desolate lake till our curiosity was fully satisfied, we mounted our horses and began our journey towards the convent of Mar Saba. This convent itself, of course, has no connection with Bible history; but the country all round is full of interesting Bible associations.

It is about five hours' journey from the Dead Sea to the convent. The road lies through the wilderness of Judea. It is wonderfully wild and even grand in its desolation. This wilderness is made up of hills and mountains of rock and sand, or gravel, without trees or grass or anything green. You can hardly think of anything more desolate than all this region of country is. The lonely path winds round and runs over a succession of lofty hills and mountains, appalling in the sternness of their unrelieved barrenness. Before my visit to it, when I read in the New Testament of "the wilderness of Judea," where John the Baptist began his ministry, and "there went out to him all Jerusalem, and the region round about, and were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins," and where "Jesus was led up of the Spirit to be tempted of the devil," I always used to think of it as a sort of forest. I supposed it was called

"a *wilderness*" because nobody lived there; but still I thought there were plenty of trees and bushes and grass growing there. This, you know, is the case with some parts of America which we speak of as the wilderness. The Adirondack region in the State of New York is an instance of this. That is a region as large as all the Holy Land put together. And it is a wilderness, too. But it is a forest wilderness. It is very fertile. Woods of fine large trees, with plenty of bushes and grass, are found everywhere. But the "wilderness of Judea" is very different from this. It is just what is spoken of in the Bible as "a waste howling wilderness." There is nothing green or beautiful for the eye of the traveller to rest on.

It was amidst these scenes of gloomy desolation that our Saviour sojourned during the forty days of his fasting and temptation. "He was there in the wilderness," says the Evangelist, "and was with the wild beasts." And as I rode along I found myself every now and then looking down into some gloomy gorge, or gazing on some desolate mountain side or summit with feelings of strange and sacred interest, when I thought that perhaps in that lonely valley Jesus in his solitude may have tarried for a night; up that steep hill-side he may have climbed, and along that giddy height he may have walked when he was wrestling single-handed with the tempter. How it hallowed the dreary wildness of that scene to know that *Jesus had been there* when he tabernacled in the flesh, and to think that along the very path that we were journeying his blessed feet may have trod; and in some one of those gloomy dells by which we were passing, it may have been that he was halting when "the angels came and ministered unto him!"

And then this same desolate region is intimately associ-

ated, too, with the memory of David, the royal ancestor of our great Redeemer. It was in this very wilderness that he spent much of his time when fleeing from the persecutions of Saul. As we reached the highest summit of the ridge, a commanding view was afforded of all the country down to the southern part of the Dead Sea. There we saw the "Wilderness of Engedi"—rugged, dreary, and bare—in the dens and caves of which David and his men so often found shelter.

As we drew near to the end of our day's journey, the road ran along the south bank of the wild ravine through which the Kedron flows. It is carried up the bank and then along the brink of the chasm, partly on a natural ledge of rock and partly on an artificial cutting. The nearer we came to the convent the deeper became the ravine along which we were journeying. The mountains overhead grew wilder and grander, while here and there dark openings of caves and grottoes were seen in the sides of the cliffs, once the retreats of monks and anchorites, but now the home only of bats. At last the massive walls and battlements of the convent burst upon our view, and the end of our day's toilsome but most exciting journey was reached.

The Convent of Mar Saba is situated in one of the wildest places I ever saw. Look at the picture and you will see this. There is a deep rent in the mountains here. Through this rent the brook Kedron, which flows past the city of Jerusalem, makes its way down to the Dead Sea.

This convent was begun in the year 483; so you see it is nearly fourteen hundred years old. It was built by a man named Saba. He was esteemed a very good and holy man. He was so much loved and esteemed for his goodness by those who knew him, that after his death the

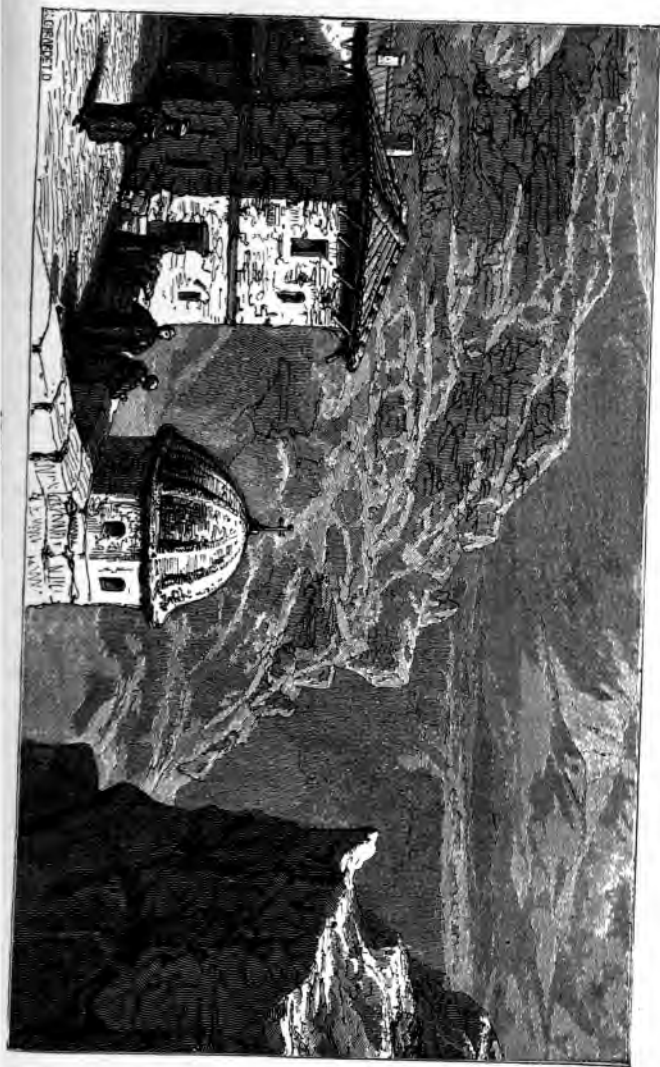
building was named, in honour of him, the Convent of Mar Saba, or Saint Saba.

He lived at a time when men thought that the best way of showing their religion was by shutting themselves up in great houses, called convents, or by living alone in dens and caves of the earth. Saba was born in the country of Asia Minor. But he came over to Palestine to live there. He looked out for a wild, lonely place, where he could get a good many men round him and establish a convent.

He made choice of this place in the wilderness of Judea which you see represented in our picture. Certainly he could not well have found a wilder or more lonely place. Here he first lived in a cave. The story is that he found a lion living in the cave, and that when he told him what he wanted to do with the cave, the lion good-naturedly went off to find another cave and left his own for the good man to occupy. Here he began to build the convent. A great many men came to live with him, and others lived in caves in different parts of the wilderness.

Many travellers seek quarters in the convent and pass a night there. It is open to all *but ladies and Arabs*. These two classes are rigidly proscribed. A female or a Bedouin is never *under any circumstances allowed to enter the portal of the establishment*. We preferred to pitch our tents in the neighbourhood and occupy our own quarters. And as it was late when we arrived, our visit to the convent was reserved for the next morning.

In the wild grandeur of its situation the Convent of Mar Saba is the most remarkable building in Palestine. It is a great, irregular mass, composed of walls, towers, cells, chambers, and chapels, overhanging a deep and awful-looking chasm, all seeming to have grown out of the rock, or to



have been stayed, as it was slipping down the precipice, by huge buttresses rising up from the abyss beneath.

"The buildings are so dispersed along the side of the ravine, from the summit far down towards the base, that it is impossible to tell how much is masonry and how much natural rock. Within, the same difficulty is felt, for everywhere advantage has been taken of natural caves, to which artificial ones have been added in bygone ages by the industry of monks, while steep flights of stairs and long narrow galleries connect the whole together, forming a labyrinth which none but the inhabitants of the place can thread. Never did the taste of monk or anchorite select a spot better adapted for gloomy devotion and useless solitude than the glen of Mar Saba."

We found the interior well worth a visit, with its groups of cells, its staircases and galleries, its chapels and tombs. One of the brotherhood was assigned us as a guide, who showed us all the different objects of interest: the cave in which St. Saba lived and died; the charnel-house, with its piled-up bones of martyred saints; the numerous chapels covered with pictures and Greek inscriptions, and the really splendid church sparkling with silver and gold.

On finishing our exploration of this strange, wild, interesting place, we made a few purchases of canes, olive-wood articles or pearl-work, as mementoes of our visit and by way of compensation to our guide for his trouble.

This convent belongs now to the Greek Church. It is possessed of very great wealth, which is only preserved from the rapacious Arabs who prowl through this region by the strength of its walls and the unceasing vigilance with which it is guarded.

May the time soon come when these idle monks will get a clearer view of the religion of their professed Master,

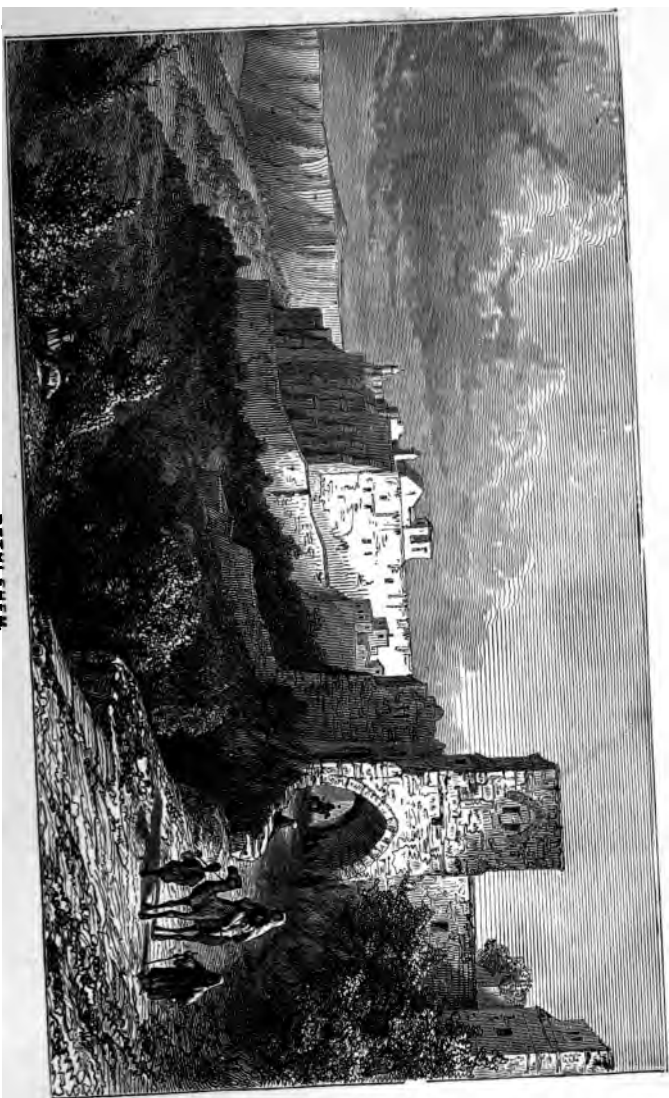
and, instead of shutting themselves up in useless solitude, will learn to imitate the example of Him who "*went about doing good.*"

BETHLEHEM.—Next to Jerusalem, where Jesus died, no spot in the Holy Land stirs the heart of the Christian traveller more, or fills it with stronger emotions, than a visit to Bethlehem, where Jesus was born. Some make their approach to this interesting spot from Jerusalem on the north. We made our way to it from the east, in returning from our visit to the Convent of Mar Saba.

After an early breakfast we made our examination of that famous convent, and then took up our line of march for Bethlehem. A three hours' ride through the wilderness of Judea brought us in sight of this sacred spot. Its appearance in approaching is very beautiful. It is situated on a narrow ridge which projects towards the east, and breaks down in abrupt terraced slopes to the deep valleys that lie beneath. The terraces are admirably kept, and are covered with rows of olive trees, intermixed with the fig and the vine. They sweep in graceful curves round the hill like natural stairs.

We rode through luxuriant fields of waving grain in approaching the city. Some of these were doubtless once the property of Naomi's rich kinsman, Boaz. Here he visited his reapers in time of harvest, and here Ruth gleaned after them, as we read in that charming book of Scripture which bears her honoured name.

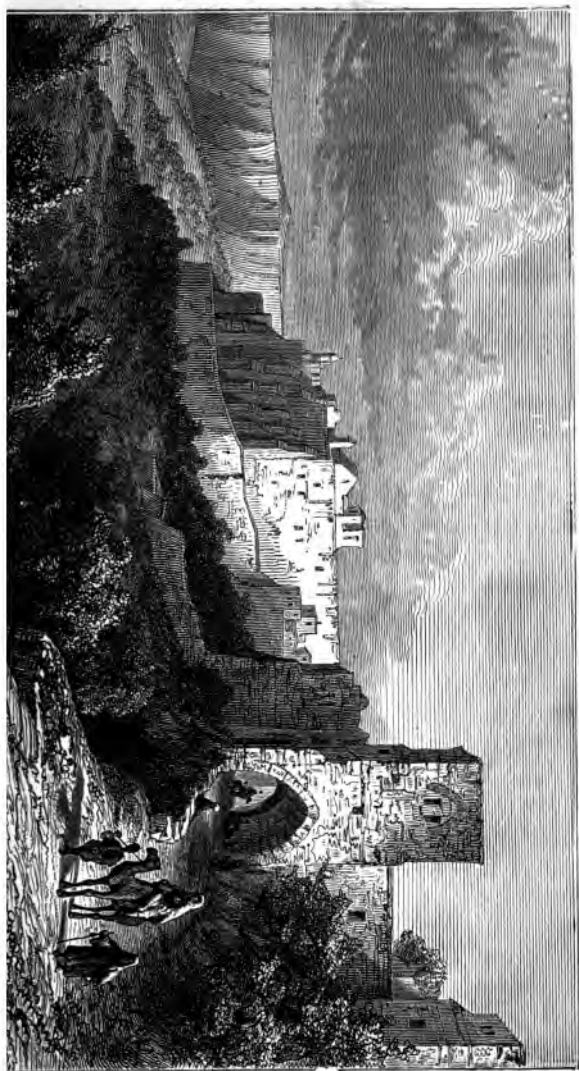
Here, too, David, the ruddy shepherd boy, kept his father's flocks. Here, in protecting them from the inroads of wild beasts and wilder men, he took his first lessons in the use of the sling and the stone—the simple weapon of those days—which prepared him for the sterner conflict with the gigantic defier of Israel's God, and for the



BETHLEHEM.

successful warfare which he waged against the hosts of the Philistines. What a charm these interesting associations threw around the scenes of this day's journey !

It was in this city that Jesse, the father of David, lived; and it was to the house of Jesse that the prophet Samuel came, as we read in 1st Samuel, 16th chapter, when God told him to take a horn full of oil and anoint one of Jesse's sons, who was to be made king in the place of Saul. Saul had refused to obey God, and for this reason he was to lose his kingdom. Jesse had eight sons. God did not tell Samuel, before he went, which of these sons was to be made king. Samuel told Jesse what he had come for, and asked him to bring in his sons. The oldest came in first. His name was Eliab. He was a tall, strong, fine-looking young man. When Samuel saw him, he thought he would make a splendid-looking king. He said to himself, "This must be the one," and he was going to anoint him. But God told him he was mistaken. He said : "Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature : for the Lord seeth not as man seeth ; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart." So the tall, good-looking Eliab had to stand aside. Then the next came, and the third and the fourth, till the seven oldest sons of Jesse had stood before Samuel, and they were all passed by. The king that God had chosen was not found among them. Then Samuel asked Jesse if these were all his children. He said there was one other, the youngest, a shepherd boy out in the field with the sheep. "Send and fetch him," said Samuel. So young David was sent for. I suppose he came in with his staff in his hand, and his scrip, or bag, hanging by his side. How little David thought, when the servant called him and he left the sheep to go into the house, what he was going for !



He probably ran when he was called, and was all in a glow when he entered the house. For the Bible says: "He was ruddy"—that is, rosy-faced—"and withal of a beautiful countenance, and goodly to look to." And the Lord said: "Arise, anoint him; for this is he." And so David was anointed to be the future king of Israel. This took place in Bethlehem. David was born there. He lived there till he left his sheep and went to be a soldier. And this is the reason that Bethlehem was called "the city of David."

About half a mile before we reached the city, our dragoon took us off the road into a field to see "The Grotto of the Shepherds." This is the spot where, tradition says, "the shepherds were abiding in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night, when, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them," and the most wondrous tidings ever revealed to mortals were made known to them, of the birth of the world's Redeemer. How it thrills the heart to stand on the spot where such a scene was once enacted!

As soon as "the angels were gone away into heaven," we are told that the shepherds went to Bethlehem to see that wondrous child of whose birth the angels had told them. We followed the example of the shepherds, and went to Bethlehem, not to see, as they did, "the young child and his mother," but only to see the place where that child was born.

Bethlehem has never been in itself a place of much importance. The prophet speaks of it as "*little* among the thousands of Judah" (Micah v. 2). Such it was then, and such it is still. Its present population does not exceed three or four thousand. These are peasants living by the cultivation of their fields and gardens. Some of them spend

their spare time in carving heads, crucifixes, models of the Holy Sepulchre, and a variety of similar articles, in olive-wood and mother-of-pearl, which they sell to pilgrims and travellers.

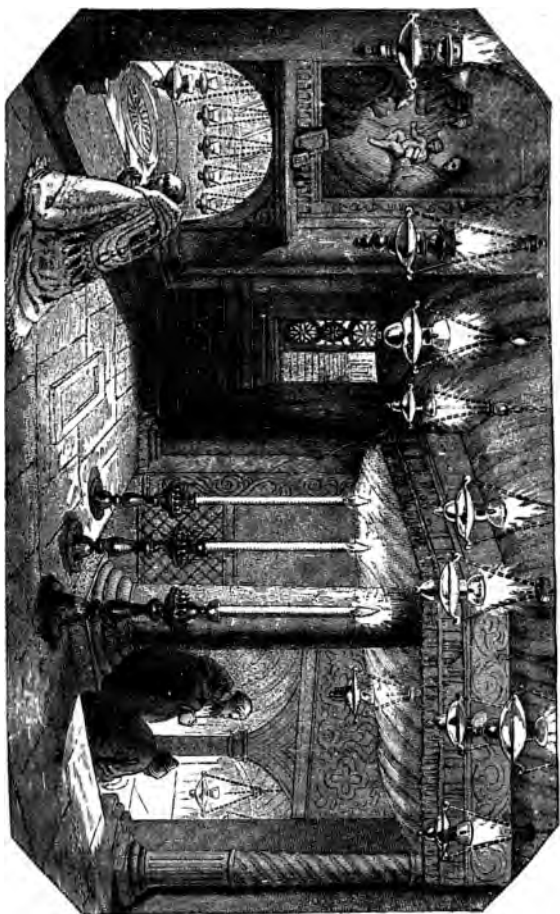
Of course, the first object of interest to every one who visits Bethlehem is that most sacred spot, the place of the nativity. A convent is erected over it, called the Convent of the Nativity. It is an enormous building, consisting of a church and three convents. This was erected by the Empress Helena in the early part of the fourth century. It is, therefore, the oldest monument of Christian architecture in the world. The nave, however, is the only part of this great structure in which the Christian tourist feels a special interest. And this is all that now remains of Helena's vast temple. From this we descended to the subterranean vault over which and for which the whole structure was erected. There, at the entrance of a long, winding passage, excavated out of the limestone rock of which the hill of Bethlehem is composed, the pilgrim finds himself in an irregular-shaped chapel, dimly lighted with silver lamps, and containing two small recesses, nearly opposite each other. In the northernmost of these is a marble slab, on which a silver star marks the supposed spot of the nativity. This star was sent from Vienna in 1852, to supply the place of that which the Greeks are said to have stolen. Around the star are inscribed the Latin words: "*Hic de Virgine Maria Jesus Christus Natus est*"—"Here Jesus Christ was born of the Virgin Mary." Assuming the authenticity of the account which connects with this spot the wondrous event that took place here, how impressive are the thoughts and feelings which fill the soul in its quiet musings here! What an era it was in the history of our world and of the universe when that

wondrous birth was accomplished! And when the grand results are realized to which it was designed to lead, how effulgent the glory that will gather round this spot for ever!

The reputed cave is all covered over with marble. Nothing of the natural rock appears. How much more interesting and impressive it would be if all these artificial coverings were removed, and the cave, if such it were, had been left without any of these attempts at extra ornamentation. On going into the Mosque of Omar at Jerusalem, and seeing how the Mohammedans have left the reputed summit of Mount Moriah there, so that nothing but the natural rock appears, you cannot but approve the good sense and taste which dictate such a course, rather than that which the Christians adopt in encasing every part of such a spot in marble.

In going through the church, I observed in one corner a devotee engaged in his strange worship. He was kneeling on the edge of a mat spread out on the marble. He would bend himself over till his forehead touched the floor. After remaining a moment in that position, he would bring his body into an upright position again, and then repeat his prostration. This "bodily exercise" he continues hour after hour, all day. We were told that he had occupied the same position, in the performance of the same unmeaning service, for *fifteen years*! Job says "the waters wear the stone." But this man has worn a hollow place in the solid marble by simply touching it with his forehead. How strange the caricatures of religion by which men will torture themselves, instead of rendering to God that "reasonable service" which he requires.

We finished our visit to Bethlehem by going to see the famous well for whose water David longed when he was in



CAVE OF THE NATIVITY.

the cave of Adullam (1 Chron. xi. 15-19). Three of his devoted followers made their way through the hosts of the Philistines and brought him water from this well. But though touched with this proof of their attachment, he poured out the water as an offering to God, being unwilling to drink of that for which his friends had hazarded their lives.

The well is a deep, wide cistern, a short distance from the gate of the city, and with every appearance of antiquity about it. A young woman from the city "came to draw water" while we were there. She kindly allowed us the use of her pitcher in partaking of the water of the well. It contains an abundant supply of good, clear water. We drank freely of it in memory of David, and in grateful recollection of the words of David's Lord, when he said: "Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again; but whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." May the Lord give us all to drink of *that* water!

THE POOLS OF SOLOMON.—After visiting the objects of interest in Bethlehem, and taking lunch there, we started for the Pools of Solomon. Our intention was to visit these on our way to Hebron, as they lie directly on the route. But a storm overtook us on the way. By the time we reached the pools we were wet through; and having no clothes with us to change, as our heavy baggage was left behind at Jerusalem, we concluded to remain there for the rest of the day. So we pitched our tents on the side of the hill overlooking the pools, and as the rain had ceased, though it was still cloudy, we walked about to try and get dry by exercise, rather than sit down in our wet clothes.

The Pools of Solomon are objects of great interest to the Christian tourist, not only for their great size, but for their undoubted antiquity. There cannot be a reasonable question that they have come down to us from Solomon's own time, and are among the few remains still extant of the works of that magnificent monarch when he was making the experiment, on the grandest scale ever attempted by mortal man, of the capacity of earthly things to satisfy the soul. He has written out the result of his experiment in



THE POOLS OF SOLOMON.

the melancholy but memorable words : "Vanity of vanities, saith the preacher; all is vanity!"

These pools are three in number. They are built on a rising ground, each occupying a different level. The bottom of the upper pool is a little above the top of the second, and the bottom of this again is a little above the top of the third. They are so arranged in order that when one is filled its overflowings may be collected in the next, and the same with the third when the second is full.

These pools are of an irregular rectangular shape. They have been partly excavated from the rocky bed of the valley, and partly built of large hewn stones. The sides

and bottoms of the pools are covered with cement. They are still used for the purpose for which they were originally constructed—namely, the supply of Jerusalem with water. At the time of our visit there was not much water in any of them, though at some seasons of the year they are well filled with water. Dr. Robinson, who is good authority in such matters, gives their dimensions as follows:—

THE LOWER POOL.

	Feet.
Length	582
Breadth { at the east end.....	207
{ at the west end.....	148
Depth.....	50

MIDDLE POOL.

Distance from the lower pool	248
Length.....	423
Breadth { at the east end.....	250
{ at the west end.....	160
Depth	39

UPPER POOL.

Distance from the middle pool.....	160
Length.....	380
Breadth { at the east end.....	250
{ at the west end.....	160
Depth	39

From this it will be seen that the lower pool is much larger than either of the others. When filled with water it is capable of floating the largest man-of-war that ever sailed.

To the north of the upper pool, and not far from it, stands an old Saracenic fortress, which is occupied by the keeper of the pools. These pools are supplied from a subterranean fountain in the open field, some distance from the valley, to the north-west. The only visible mark of

this fountain is a circular opening, like the mouth of a well, generally covered with a large stone. In Canticles iv. 12, Solomon says: "A garden inclosed is my sister, my spouse; a spring shut up, a fountain sealed." Tradition says that this spring furnished the wise king with the beautiful figure which he here employs, and which every experimental Christian is accustomed to think of and quote as applying to Jesus.

This circular opening is the entrance to a fountain which is thus described by Maundrell: "Through this hole you descend directly down, but not without some difficulty, for about four yards, and then arrive at a vaulted room fifteen paces long and eight broad. Joining to this is another room of the same fashion, but somewhat less. Both these rooms are covered with handsome stone arches, very ancient, and doubtless the work of Solomon himself. You find here four places at which the water rises. From these separate sources it is conveyed by little rivulets into a kind of basin, and from thence it is carried by a large subterraneous passage down to the pools."

This passage terminates at the north-west corner of the upper pool, in a sort of artificial fountain. From this fountain an aqueduct is supplied which runs along the sides of the pools. It communicates with the upper pool, and throws the surplus in there when there is more than it needs itself. It also communicates with the lower pool, and is replenished from it when the supply at the fountain falls short. This aqueduct runs on past Bethlehem and thence to Jerusalem, where it formerly terminated in the Temple, to supply the water needed for the various washings and other uses of those who conducted the worship of the sanctuary.

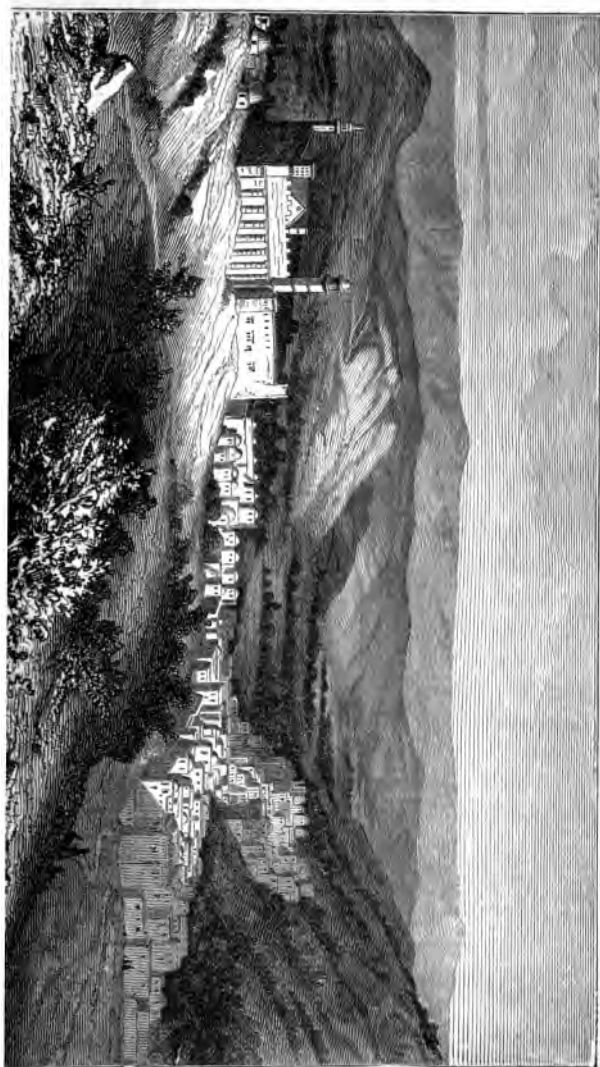
The ground around these famous pools is now barren and

dreary. But it was here, doubtless, that Solomon had his "garden inclosed," as well as his "fountain sealed." It was on the neighbouring hills and in the valleys near, without any question, that he planted the vineyards, and made the gardens and orchards of all kinds of fruits, and made pools of water, to water therewith the wood that brought forth trees, of which he speaks in Ecclesiastes ii 4-6. And it was to this spot, in the beauty and fertility that then marked it, that he was accustomed, as Josephus tells us, to take his morning drive. But the luxuriance and fertility on which the eye of the beholder then rested with delight have all disappeared. And of the great works which Solomon in all his glory builded, these pools that bear his name are all that remain.

HEBRON.—Here is a view of one of the most interesting cities in Palestine. Hebron, the city thus represented, is interesting to us for three reasons. One of these is its great age. It is one of the oldest towns not only in that country, but in the world. You know what an old country Egypt is. Yet the Bible tells us that "Hebron was built seven years before Zoan in Egypt." But nobody knows when Zoan was built. And so we only know that this city of Hebron, about which we read so much in the Bible, is so old that no one can tell when it was built or who was the builder.

Everything is so new in America, that we seldom see a town or city that is more than one or two hundred years old. But when we think of a city like Hebron, that was built almost *four thousand years* ago, we feel that it must be interesting to see it, just on account of its great age.

But another reason why Hebron is an interesting place is on account of *its great beauty*. It is one of the prettiest towns in Palestine. It is very pleasantly situated in a



fertile valley, surrounded by rocky hills. The sides of these hills are covered with vineyards. The grapes which these vineyards yield are the finest in Palestine. There used to be great groves of oak trees in the valley of Hebron. These must have added very much to its beauty ; but now they are nearly all gone.

You remember that when Joshua sent men to spy out the land, before the Israelites went into it, we read about a famous bunch of grapes which they brought back with them as a specimen of the fruits of the land. It was so large that two men had to carry it between them, by a pole that rested on their shoulders. That bunch of grapes came from Eshcol, and Eshcol was in the valley of Hebron. How beautiful those grapes must have looked as they were growing there ! And so we see that Hebron has always been remarkable for the fertility and beauty which still make it so interesting a place to visit.

And then the third thing which makes Hebron interesting is *its connection with the history of the Bible*.

This was the home of the good old patriarchs that we read so much about in the Old Testament. When Abraham came into Canaan he lived here. We are told that "he pitched his tent in the plain of Mamre, which is in Hebron." Here, no doubt, he often sat in the door of his tent, and watched his flocks of sheep as they were quietly feeding on the plains and over the hills of Hebron. Here he dwelt when the news was brought him that the city of Sodom had been plundered, and his nephew Lot had been carried captive, with all his family. And it was from Hebron that he set out with his little band of three hundred men to rescue them from the hands of their enemies, as we read in the 14th chapter of Genesis. Here, too, it was on two or three occasions that the angels of

God came to visit him, and tell him what God was going to do.

Here it was that Sarah died, and Abraham bought "the cave of the field of Machpelah for a burying-place." There Sarah was buried, and Abraham too when he died.

It was in the valley of Hebron that Isaac lived his quiet life. It was in one of the fields of Hebron that he "went out to meditate at eventide," when his father's servant brought Rebekah to him, who became his wife.

It was in Hebron that Jacob lived after he came back from his long visit to his uncle Laban; and when he sent his darling son Joseph forth to see his brethren, on that journey from which he never came back, it was from "the vale of Hebron" that Joseph started.

These three patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, with their wives, Sarah, Rebekah, and Leah, are all buried in the cave of Machpelah, in Hebron. It would be very interesting to visit that cave, and look at the graves of those good people. But this cannot be done, for the Mohammedans have built a great mosque or church over this cave. This mosque is considered very sacred by them, and they never let a stranger enter it.

When David was first chosen king, on the death of Saul, he made Hebron his capital, and he reigned there for seven years.

Hebron has a population of about seven or eight thousand people. The houses are larger and better looking than in most of the other towns in Palestine. It is pleasant to think of it as the home of the patriarchs and as the place where they are buried.

ABRAHAM'S OAK.—We have spoken about Hebron, that ancient city in the south of Palestine; well, this tree stands not far from Hebron. It is about two miles distant from

it. The tree represented in our engraving is a fine old tree. It is said to be the finest oak tree that grows in Palestine. The trunk at its lower part is about twenty-three feet in circumference. If it were cut down and sawed up into boards or planks, they would be more than seven feet wide. These would make good-sized boards indeed.



ABRAHAM'S OAK.

About six feet from the ground the trunk branches out into three great arms. These afterwards divide themselves into very numerous branches. On one side these branches run out to about fifty feet, and on the other to between eighty and ninety. The foliage of this tree is very thick and beautiful. This famous oak stands in the midst of a fine, wide, grassy plain. Not far off from it is a good spring of clear, cool water ; and parties often come out here

from Hebron on pleasure excursions, or picnics as we should call them.

But the chief interest about this tree is connected with the honoured name it bears. It is called "*Abraham's Oak*." Of course we cannot suppose that this tree, great and venerable as it appears, has really been standing from the time of Abraham. That good old patriarch lived about eighteen hundred years before the time of our Saviour; and if we add to these the years that have passed away since the birth of Christ, we see that it is more than thirty-six hundred years since Abraham was living in Palestine. This seems like a pretty good age for a tree. And yet we know that some trees do live to a very wonderful age.

The oldest tree in England is an oak tree. It is called "the Parliament Oak." This name was given to it because King Edward I. once held a parliament under the shadow of this tree. It is six hundred years since Edward I. lived. This "Parliament Oak" is reckoned to be *fifteen hundred years* old.

One of our big trees in California is said to be *three thousand* years old. Among the cedars of Lebanon is one tree that is said to be *four thousand* years old! If this is really its age, then this grand old tree must have begun to grow *soon after Noah came out of the ark!*

But if the oak tree seen in our picture is not the very same tree that stood there when Abraham was alive, it is no doubt one of the descendants of that tree. And so it is true that on the very ground over which this tree now spreads its great branches Abraham pitched his tent. It was here that he was sitting one day when Jesus came to him in the form of a traveller, and two angels with him in the same form, as we read in the 18th chapter of Genesis. They stopped and dined with Abraham, and talked with

him about what they were going to do with the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah on account of the wickedness of the people there.

And when one rests under the shadow of this grand old tree, it is pleasant to think how many patriarchs and prophets have stood there. All that you see there now—the same fields, the same hills, and the same mountains—have been seen by Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, by Samuel, and David, and Solomon.

We find a great deal said about oak trees in the Bible. When Jacob found out that some of his family were worshipping idols, we read in Genesis xxxv. 4 that he took all the images of these gods, and the ear-rings which the women wore—because these had the names or marks of the idols on them—and buried them under an oak that was in Shechem.

When Deborah, the nurse of Rebekah, died, they buried her under an oak in Bethel. When Joshua made a covenant with the people before he died, we read (Joshua xxiv. 26) that “he took a great stone, and set it up under an oak that was by the sanctuary of the Lord.” That stone was to be a witness to the people of the covenant he had made with them.

And when David's wicked son Absalom had rebelled against his father, and had gathered an army to fight against him, his army was defeated, and he fled away from the battle. In 2nd Samuel xviii. 9, we read: “And Absalom rode upon a mule, and the mule went under the thick boughs of a great oak, and he was taken up between the heaven and the earth; and the mule that was under him went away.” When Joab, the captain of David's army, heard of this, “he took three darts in his hand, and thrust them through the heart of Absalom, while he was yet alive in the midst of the oak.”

CHAPTER IX.

FROM JERUSALEM TO BETHEL—THE LAST LOOK AT JERUSALEM—THE MEETING-PLACE OF DAVID AND JONATHAN—THE CITY OF NOB—GIBEAH OF SAUL—THE SCENE OF RIZPAH'S DEVOTION—RAMAH—SHILOH—BETHEL.



WE had finished our explorations in and around Jerusalem, and were prepared to start northward on our journey through the land. The country through which this part of our route lay is not particularly attractive in its physical features. The whole aspect of it is rocky and barren and desolate. And yet it is so full of points connected with the Old Testament history, that every step becomes interesting from the Bible associations that cluster around it. I will attempt nothing more than to speak of some of the points of special interest which the traveller passes by in his journey from Jerusalem to Bethel.

THE LAST LOOK AT JERUSALEM.—Soon after leaving Jerusalem the road passes for a short distance along the bank of the Kedron. It then crosses the valley, and winds up the hill Scopus. This is the last point from which to get a look at the Holy City.

Here we turned and lingered a while to gaze on the hallowed spot. How stirring the thoughts that are suggested by contemplation there! Earth has no other scene that can call up such associations and exercise such a spell upon

the mind as that does. All the wondrous things that have transpired in the past, and all the "glorious things" written for the future, concerning that "city of our God," present themselves at once to view.

But we had not long to indulge in meditation. Our cavalcade was moving on. The last lingering look was taken, and we were moving forward with our company. But though Jerusalem was left behind, there was no lack of holy places and localities full of interest all before us.

THE MEETING-PLACE OF DAVID AND JONATHAN.—The first part of our road lay near the scene of the affecting interview between David and Jonathan described in the 20th chapter of 1st Samuel. There they made their covenant with each other, and exchanged their solemn vow of enduring friendship; and there the loving, faithful friends separated from each other, to meet again no more on earth except for one brief stolen interview in the wood of Ziph, as we read in 1st Samuel xxiii. 15–18.

THE CITY OF NOB.—After this we passed by the site of Nob, one of the cities of the Levites, where Ahimelech the priest lived to whom David applied for bread as he fled from the face of Saul. David prevaricated to Ahimelech when he told him that the haste with which he was going on the king's business had caused him to leave without either provisions or arms; and the priest gave him of the shewbread, and the sword of Goliath, which was laid up before the ark as a trophy. Doeg the Edomite, who was there, reported it to Saul; and this act resulted in the slaughter of Ahimelech and all his family, and all the priests of Nob. How sadly David must have felt when he found that his want of straightforward, honest truthfulness had resulted in such a scene of blood! And yet in permitting that terrible calamity to take place, God was only employing

the sword of Saul to execute on the descendants of old Eli the judgment denounced against him for his sad failure of parental duty, in allowing his sons to grow up in disobedience to himself and to God. How instructive and suggestive an illustration of the working of God's providence this incident furnishes! and how many profitable lessons it affords to parents, to teachers, and to children! We have the account of the judgments recorded against the house of Eli in 1st Samuel ii. 27-36; iii. 11-14. The sad fulfilment of the same we read of in 1st Samuel xxii. 9-23.

GIBEAH OF SAUL.—Our road also lay by Gibeah, where Saul had his headquarters at one period of his reign. It was also memorable as the scene of the sad event narrated in the 19th chapter of Judges, and which almost led to the extinction of the tribe of Benjamin.

THE SCENE OF RIZPAH'S DEVOTION.—It was here, too, that Rizpah made the rocks of Gibeah classic ground, by the noble display of her true motherly feeling for her slaughtered sons. God is a covenant-keeping God himself, and he requires his people to be mindful of their oaths and covenants. Saul sought to put the Gibeonites to death, in utter disregard of the covenant which Joshua had made with them, in behalf of Israel, to let them live. For this act of treachery, God sent a famine on the land in the days of David; and before this famine ceased, the slaughter of seven of Saul's sons was demanded to vindicate the sacredness of the covenant which he had broken. Among them were two of Rizpah's sons. We read (2 Sam. xxi. 9, 10) "that they were put to death in the days of harvest. And Rizpah took sackcloth, and spread it for her upon the rock, from the beginning of harvest until water dropped upon them out of heaven, and suffered neither the birds of the air to rest on them by day, nor the

beasts of the field by night." And thus the faithfulness of Rizpah's maternal feeling has consecrated and made memorable "the rock of Gibeah."

RAMAH.—Ramah of Benjamin was the next point. This is celebrated in sacred history in connection with Deborah the prophetess, the wife of Lapidoth, who judged Israel after Ehud was dead. We read (Judges iv. 5): "And she dwelt under the palm tree of Deborah, between Ramah and Bethel." Here it was "she sent and called Barak the son of Abinoam," and bade him "draw toward Mount Tabor ten thousand men of the children of Naphtali, and the children of Zebulun." And thus from "the palm tree of Deborah" went forth the influence which led to one of the most brilliant victories in Israel's glorious history—a victory which shattered the power of Jabin, king of Canaan, and gave to the oppressed and suffering land rest and freedom for forty years.

SHILOH.—There is only one other place I will refer to in connection with our first day's journey, and that is Shiloh, where the tabernacle was first established on Israel's entrance into Canaan. This interesting spot lies about half-an-hour's ride to the right of the road along which our route lay. There is no ruin or trace of former buildings to mark the locality. It is a scene of utter desolation. And yet so accurately is the position of it described in Judges xxi. 19, that there never has been any difficulty in determining exactly where it stood. There Shiloh is spoken of as "a place which is on the north side of Bethel, on the east side of the highway that goeth up from Bethel to Shechem, and on the south of Lebonah."

Here it was that Hannah prayed for Samuel. And when her prayer was granted, it was here she brought the fruit of her prayers and consecrated him to the service of

God ; and here, as we read in 1st Samuel ii. 18, it was that "Samuel ministered before the Lord, being a child, girded with a linen ephod." It was here that

"Little Samuel woke
And heard his Maker's voice."

Here he first received the message of God, and was established as a prophet of the Lord, and judged Israel with honour to himself and glory to God, and with blessing to the people all his days.

After the ark came back from its captivity among the Philistines it never returned to Shiloh. The people of that place did not appreciate the privilege they possessed in its presence among them. For this, God took away the blessing, and let desolation's blight come down upon them. And in after times we find God making use of the experience through which this place had passed to impress upon the minds of his people the danger of despising the religious privileges with which they were favoured. He says to Israel, by the prophet Jeremiah (vii. 12): "Go ye now unto my place which was in Shiloh, where I set my name at the first, and see what I did to it for the wickedness of my people Israel."


And the lesson thus taught is for us as well as for Israel. Shiloh teaches this lesson to every traveller who pauses to muse on the desolation that now marks it. In silent but eloquent tones it seems to say,—"*Improve your privileges while you have them, lest they be taken away from you*," or as the prophet expresses the same idea in different language, "Give glory to the Lord your God, before he cause darkness."

BETHEL.—On the evening of the first day of our journey north from Jerusalem, we pitched our tents for the night in the fields that surround the little village of Bethel. The day had been a charming one, and the scenes through

which we had journeyed at every step replete with sacred and stirring associations. And then, at the close of such a day, what a spot Bethel was in which to tarry for the night!

It is situated about twelve miles north from Jerusalem, on the road that leads to Shechem. The present village is a miserable collection of squalid-looking houses, built from the ruins of the former city. These ruins are spread over quite a large surface. The village stands on the side of a hill, the summit of which commands an interesting and extensive prospect. The dome of the Mosque of Omar at Jerusalem may be seen from it. The country around is rocky, and, in its outward aspect, not very attractive; but there are so many associations of Bible history connected with it, that it cannot fail to be deeply interesting to the Christian traveller.

It was here that Abraham is said to have "pitched his tent," as he "journeyed through the land," "going on still toward the south." And after his sojourn in Egypt it was to Bethel that he returned. And it was on the hill near Bethel that Abraham and Lot stood to take a wide survey of the country, "on the right hand and on the left," when they were meditating a separation from each other because of the perpetually-recurring strife between their respective herdsmen. There is no other spot in all this region which affords so fine a view. It was here that "Lot lifted up his eyes" toward the right, "and beheld all the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered everywhere.....even as the garden of the Lord, like unto Egypt." That land was very different then from what it is now. No crust of salt had covered the earth, and no volcanic convulsion had as yet blasted its verdure or marred its beauty. Then Lot made choice of Sodom as the place of his future home, and in his departure from Abraham.



And after Lot had separated from him, it was here that God appeared to Abraham and said to him : "Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward : for all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever. Arise, walk through the land, in the length of it, and in the breadth of it ; for I will give it unto thee." What a charm the recollection of such a scene throws around Bethel and its neighbourhood !

The next interesting scene associated with this sacred spot is connected with the history of Jacob. He had provoked the anger of his brother Esau against him by taking away his blessing. This obliged him to flee from Hebron to his uncle Laban in Padan-aram. It was a long journey to take. In pursuing this journey, Bethel was "the certain place on which Jacob lighted, and where he tarried all night, because the sun was set ; and he took of the stones of that place, and put them for his pillow, and lay down in that place to sleep."

After our tents were pitched, I took my Bible and wandered forth into the field. I sat down beneath the shelter of a great rock and read the 28th chapter of Genesis. I looked over the outspread field. It was full of rocks and stones : Jacob did not have to go far to find his pillow. And here it was, perhaps near where I sat, that the youthful traveller had that wondrous vision of the ladder, with its foot upon the earth and its top reaching to heaven, with the angels of God ascending and descending upon it. Here, too, the voice of God was addressed to him, renewing the covenant before made with Abraham, and giving him that sweet promise, so suited to his wants as a lonely traveller : "Behold, I will be with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest,


and will bring thee again into this land ; for I will not leave thee until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of." What a comfort this promise must have been to Jacob ! How it must have been to him like the food which the angel brought to Elijah, "in the strength of which he went for many days !"

We do not wonder at the feeling with which Jacob awoke in the morning, when he said : "Surely the Lord is in this place, and I knew it not. This is none other but *the house of God*, and this is the gate of heaven." And thus it was that Bethel got its name—"the house of God." The remembrance of such a scene as this must make Bethel and its neighbourhood a hallowed spot for ever.

It was to Bethel that Jacob came later in life. Here he built an altar to the God who gave him this cheering vision.

It was at Bethel, after the kingdom was divided, that Jeroboam set up a golden calf, and made it one of the centres of worship in his kingdom, to prevent the people of Israel from going up to Jerusalem to worship. And it was here, on some great occasion of public gathering, that "a man of God from Judah" came to proclaim God's wrath against this idolatrous service, when the miracle took place of the rending of the altar, and the withering and restoring of the king's hand, as we read in 1st Kings xiii.

It was to Bethel that Elisha came after Elijah had been taken from him into heaven. And here the children coming out to mock him were destroyed by the two bears that issued forth from the woods. This seems to show what the influence of idolatry had been in lowering the standard of morals among the people. After this the desolation foretold by Amos and Hosea seems to have clung to it, and Beth-el, "the house of God," became, literally, Beth-aven, "the house of nought."



CHAPTER X.

FROM BETHEL TO JENIN—MEETING A HAIL-STORM—JACOB'S WELL—
NABLUS AND MOUNT GERIZIM—SAMARIA—DOTHAN—JENIN.



WE left Bethel in the morning and took an early start, as we had a long day's ride before us. Our journey lay through the portion allotted to the tribe of Ephraim. It is the richest land we had seen since leaving the fertile plains around Jaffa. The luxuriant valleys and plains of this tribe, with hills bearing evidence of having been terraced to their very summits, show conclusively that the blessing promised by the dying patriarch to the descendants of his favourite son Joseph still lingers here, for the "chief things of these ancient mountains"—vines, olives, corn—yet flourish abundantly amidst "these lasting hills." Jacob knew what he was about when, "guiding his hands wittingly," he laid his right hand on the head of Joseph's youngest son, as he said, "In thee shall Israel bless, saying, God make thee as Ephraim."

We had a most unexpected experience in regard to weather. The early morning was fine, though with heavy clouds floating through the sky. Shortly after starting, however, it began to rain, and this continued at intervals all through the day. The rain poured down at times in torrents, accompanied by furious bursts of wind that seemed as if it would almost take us off our horses. It was varied occasionally by fierce blasts of pelting hail, that would

spread a white covering over the landscape in a few seconds. We had our waterproof appliances on, and so managed to keep pretty dry. In any other country we should have sought the shelter of some friendly house by the roadside, and have waited till the storm was over. But *there are no such houses in Palestine*. The few inhabitants found in this land dwell only in walled towns or villages, where their numbers may afford them mutual protection. But in journeying through this country, from one end to the other, you find no scattered dwellings,—no house, no cottage, no barn, no shed, nor building of any kind, to offer the traveller “a refuge from the storm.” The cause of this is found in the insecurity of life and property, arising from the incursions of the wild and wandering Arab tribes, and the inefficiency of the government to hold them in proper check.

And so, notwithstanding the inclemency of the weather, there was nothing left us but to go on and make the best of it. It was amusing, when the blasts of hail came down, to see how our horses would instantly wheel round and turn their tails to it, and stand still in that position till the storm was passed. The day was relieved by occasional bursts of sunshine. These, however, were of short continuance, and soon gave way to returning showers of rain.

Towards noon, during one of these brief gleams of sunshine, we halted near the ruins of an old well to take our lunch. We had just unrolled a rug upon the grass, on which to spread our provisions, when down came the rain again, and we were obliged to take our lunch as best we could under such imperfect shelter as our sun-umbrellas would afford.

While we were at lunch, several modern Rachels from a neighbouring village came to the well to fill their water-

skins. They lingered about till our repast was finished, and then eagerly gathered up the orange-skins and chicken-bones, and other cast-off remnants of our meal. What a comment this incident affords on the condition of the present inhabitants of a land whose distinctive peculiarity once was that "it flowed with milk and honey!" How different the state of things there now from what once existed, when it was said of the people dwelling there, "Thou shalt not lack any thing in it!" (Deut. viii. 9).

Our ride was ten hours long, and the storm renewed itself at intervals all through the day. The terminus to which we were looking forward was the ancient city of Sychar or Shechem. The modern name of the city is Nablus. On nearing the city, we turned aside a little to visit "Jacob's well," where "Jesus sat weary" with his journey, while he had that gracious and blessed interview with the woman of Samaria, as we read in the 4th chapter of John.

In visiting some places in the Holy Land, you cannot be sure that they are the very places that we read about in the Bible. But this is not the case with Jacob's Well. There can be no doubt that this is the very well which was dug in the days when Jacob was living there.

: There are several things which make a visit to this well very interesting.

One of these is *the great age* of the well. Jacob lived almost as many years before the coming of our Saviour as have passed away since the time when he came. It was about eighteen hundred years before the birth of Christ when Jacob dug this well. And if we add those years to the time that has passed since Jesus came, we have nearly four thousand years as marking the age of this well. How strange it seems to look upon anything that

man has made that is as old as this ! What wonderful things have taken place, both in that land and in other lands, since first this well was dug ! Every page in our blessed Bible has been written since then. All the most interesting stories that we read about in the Bible took place after the digging of this well. Joseph's wonderful history ; the deliverance of the children of Israel from Egypt ; their wanderings in the wilderness, and their conquest of the land, have all occurred since then. Samuel, and David, and Solomon, and nearly all the other good men mentioned in the Bible, have lived and died since Jacob dug this well. And when one sits down beside this well, and thinks of all these things which have happened since it was dug, how very strange it seems !

And then this well *is interesting in itself*, apart from its age. It is about seventy-five feet deep down to the water, when there is any in it, for sometimes it is dry. It has been dug through the solid rock. How much time and labour it must have taken to make this well ! We hardly know how it was made. When we have to dig a well through the solid rock now, we drill holes in the rock, and put powder in the holes, and blast the rock. This breaks it into pieces, and makes it easy to get the rock out. But Jacob had no powder to use ; and we wonder how he was able to dig through the rock. But he did it, somehow or other. And it was well done, too. It is about nine feet wide, and the sides of the well have been finished off quite smoothly. The top of the well is arched over, and has a round opening in it, very much like the openings to our coal vaults in the pavements in front of our houses. There is nothing to mark the spot now but some broken columns and big stones. There used to be a small chapel

JACOB'S WELL



standing over this well a long time ago, but it is all gone now.

Another interesting thing about this well is to think that *the patriarch Jacob, and his family, and his cattle drank of its water*. I dare say that Joseph—when he was a boy, before he was sold into Egypt—often came to this well when he was tired with play, and felt thirsty from the heat of the day, and refreshed himself with long draughts of its clear, cool water. And Joseph is buried not far from this well. We read in John iv. 5 that it is “near to the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph.” When the children of Israel came up out of Egypt, we are told that they brought up the bones of Joseph with them, and they buried those bones in this parcel of ground (Joshua xxiv. 32). There is a square enclosure on this spot, with a white wall around it. Inside of this wall is a tomb to the memory of Joseph. You can see this as you stand by the well, and this adds to the interest of the spot.

But, after all, the most pleasing thing to think of in visiting this well is *the connection of Jesus with it*. I refer now to the beautiful story that we read of in the 4th chapter of John. On one occasion when Jesus was going up on foot from Galilee to Jerusalem, he was weary with his journey, and sat down here to rest himself, while his disciples went into the city near by to buy food. As he was resting here, a Samaritan woman came to draw water from this well. This woman was leading a wicked life. Jesus felt pity for her. He wanted to draw her into conversation, and so he asked her for a drink of water. She expressed her surprise at this, because the Jews and the Samaritans disliked each other so much that they had no dealings with one another. But Jesus told her that he had “*living water*” to give to thirsty souls, and that those

who drank of this water would feel so happy that they would never thirst for earthly things or care about them any more. This woman became very much interested in what Jesus said. It led her to see that she was a sinner, and no doubt she became a Christian. This must have made her always feel a great interest in Jacob's Well. I suppose she never forgot the day when she met that Stranger there who talked so beautifully to her about that "living water."

We reached Shechem at the close of the day, wet, weary, and chilled with the cold after our long ride. The idea of camping on the wet ground, with our baggage all wet, had not been a very cheering one during the latter part of the day. To our very great relief, our dragoman, Ali Solomon, had gone on ahead and secured quarters for us at the house of a friend of his in the city; and we found ourselves, at the close of the day, snugly quartered with a Samaritan family, and realizing the unspeakable comfort of having a dry roof over our heads and a dry floor beneath us, as the storm was still raging, with alternate hail and rain, mingled with thunder and lightning and furious blasts of wind. And so ended a memorable day in our wanderings through the Holy Land.

NABLUS AND MOUNT GERIZIM.—The storm continued for the next two days. We were therefore compelled to remain longer than we either expected or desired to do in the hospitable dwelling of our Samaritan friends. During the first of these two days the storm raged so violently as to preclude the possibility of any out-door occupations. Hearing that our good friend Dr. March, with his party, was storm-stayed like ourselves, and had sought shelter in a neighbouring house, we sent the doctor an invitation to dine with us, which he accepted; and we had a pleasant

time together, comparing notes of our past experiences and talking over our plans and prospects for the future.

By noon of the second day the storm ceased, and the sun came out pleasantly. It was too late, however, to start on our journey, as it would have been impossible to reach the next regular stopping-place before dark. We concluded, therefore, to spend the afternoon in taking a general survey of this ancient city, and in making the ascent of Mount Gerizim.

Nablus is delightfully situated. It lies in the beautiful valley that runs between Mounts Ebal and Gerizim. This is a remarkably fertile valley, sparkling with fountains and streams of water. It is filled with the richest vegetation and foliage, arising from its luxuriant corn-fields, its orchards of fruit trees and belts of olives. Every colour is here seen, from the deepest green to the softest gray and most delicate russet, all harmoniously blended, and melting in the distance into the purple and azure tints of the mountain sides and summits.

Nablus is a curious old place. The city of Shechem, which is supposed to have occupied the same site, runs back in its history over a period of four thousand years. During the reign of the Emperor Vespasian, Shechem was rebuilt, and named Neapolis or the New City; and this appellation has run into the Arabic Nablus or Nablus, the modern name which the city bears.

The streets of the city are narrow and vaulted over, and in the rainy season it is difficult to pass along many of them on account of the streams of water which rush over the pavement with a deafening roar. The houses are of stone, resembling in style and general appearance those of Jerusalem. The city in its general aspect strikes one as remarkable for its gloom and filth than any other in

Palestine. *Soap*, indeed, is one of the staple productions of the place; but then this is made for exportation, and not for home use.

The population of Nablus is about eight thousand. Of these, five hundred are Christians, one hundred and fifty Samaritans, and one hundred Jews. The little handful of




NABLUS.

Samaritans left still retain a synagogue, in which their famous copy of the Samaritan Pentateuch is preserved with great care. They claim that it was written by Abishua, the son of Phinehas, three thousand five hundred years ago. It is no doubt as old as any of our Hebrew manuscripts, and perhaps older. Those who have had an

opportunity of examining it critically are of the opinion, judging from the vellum and the character of the writing, that it may at least be assigned to the sixth or seventh century of our era.

We enjoyed our excursion to the top of Mount Gerizim very much. The summit is about eight hundred feet above the level of the valley in which the city stands. This is not very much of an ascent to make, but as the road was rough and very wet from the recent rains, we went up on horseback.

On rising above the city the view of the valley is very fine. While climbing up the mount, I paused from time to time to look back and try to picture to myself the wondrous scene that was once presented here, when all Israel was gathered on the sides of these twin mountains. Near the eastern end the valley is not more than sixty rods wide; and just there, I suppose, the assembled tribes were convened to hear "the blessings and the curses" read by the Levites. These are given in full detail in the 27th and 28th chapters of Deuteronomy. Joshua tells us in the 8th chapter that this was actually done, and how the command of God was carried out. Simeon, and Levi, and Judah, and Issachar, and Joseph, and Benjamin, stood on Mount Gerizim; and Reuben, Gad, Asher, Zebulun, Dan, and Naphtali on Mount Ebal; while all Israel, and their elders, and officers, and their judges, stood on this side of the ark and on that side before the priests which bare the ark of the covenant of the Lord. The whole nation of Israel, with the women and the little ones, was there. And Joshua read all the words of the law, the blessings and the curses: there was not a word of all the law that Moses commanded which Joshua read not before all the congregation of Israel. What a grand assembly that must have been!



And when the voice of the veteran leader was heard proclaiming, "Cursed be the man that maketh any graven image, an abomination to Jehovah," and then the loud "*Amen*" of that mighty congregation was heard in thunder tones rising and swelling and re-echoing from Ebal to Gerizim, and from Gerizim to Ebal, how impressive and inspiring the scene must have been !

The view from the top of the mount is one of the finest in Palestine. Just below is Joseph's tomb, in the parcel of ground which his father gave to him. Near by is Jacob's Well, where Jesus sat when, pointing to Gerizim, he said to the woman of Samaria : "The hour cometh when they shall neither in this mountain nor yet in Jerusalem worship the Father." And then far away stretches out the beautiful and fertile portion of the tribe of Ephraim.

We wandered with interest among the extensive ruins of the old Samaritan Temple, of which I cannot now speak particularly. Not far from these ruins is the traditional spot, as the Samaritans affirm, on which Abraham offered up his son Isaac. Dean Stanley favours the identity of this spot. But to me it seems passing strange how any one who has journeyed through this land could for a moment suppose it possible for Abraham to have left Hebrón and reached this spot on the third day of his journey.

We returned to our Samaritan home before sundown, delighted with our excursion, and rejoicing in the prospect of a fine day for resuming our journey in the morning.

SAMARIA.—We left Nablus and took leave of the "good Samaritans," who had "showed us no little kindness" during the prevalence of the inclement weather which had driven us from our tents. We took an early start, as we had a long day's journey before us. It was still cloudy, though "the rain was over and gone." To be in motion

again was very pleasant after our long halt, and we had a delightful ride through a very beautiful portion of the country. The temperature was cool and pleasant, and the friendly clouds "spread out for a covering" added not a little to our enjoyment by sheltering us from the powerful rays of a Syrian sun.

A charming ride of two hours brought us to the site of Samaria, which was for a long time the capital of the kingdom of Israel. The situation is perhaps the most picturesque of any city in Palestine. Samaria stood on a circular hill which rises to a considerable height. Travellers differ in their estimates of its elevation. Some give its height as three hundred feet, and others at six hundred. We took no measurement ourselves, but, from our impressions of it, would give its height as from four to five hundred feet. There is a broad plateau on the top of the hill, on which the city stood. Around the base of the hill is a broad, rich valley five or six miles in extent. Beyond this valley, which completely isolates the hill, the mountains rise again on every side, forming a grand natural amphitheatre encircling the hill of Samaria, which stands in the centre, and is adorned with the most magnificent surroundings. The hill itself, on which the city stood, is cultivated from its base, and its terraced sides and its summit are covered with grain and with olive trees. About midway of the ascent the hill is surrounded by a narrow terrace of level land, like a belt, below which the roots of the hill spread out more gradually into the valley. Higher up, too, are found marks of slight terraces, once occupied, it may be, by the streets of the ancient city.

The modern village is called Sebutieh, from Sebaste, the name which Herod gave to the city as he rebuilt it. It contains only some sixty houses, with a population of about

four hundred. It stands upon the broad terrace, midway up the eastern side of the hill. The houses are substantially built of old materials, and in their rude walls may be seen many a remnant of ancient taste and splendour.

Apart from the natural beauty which marks the site which Samaria once occupied, there are two objects of special interest here to engage the attention of the tourist. One of these is the remains of the church dedicated to the



RUINS OF SAMARIA.

memory of John the Baptist. Perched on the brow of the declivity east of the village, it is the first object to attract the notice of the traveller, and is one of the most picturesque ruins in Palestine. An old tradition affirms that the church is erected on the spot which marks the burial-place of John the Baptist, if not the scene of his martyrdom. The roof of the building is gone, but the walls remain. The total length of the interior is 153 feet, and the breadth 75.

Portions of the building are thought by some, who have carefully examined them, and who are competent judges of such matters, to belong to the early Saracenic age. There can be little doubt, however, that the building as it now stands is at least as old as the time of the Crusades. Dr. Robinson says: "The presence of so many crosses of the Knights of St. John, and the circumstance that the spot was regarded as the sepulchre of their patron saint, render it probable that the church may have been erected by that order, in connection, perhaps, with the Latin bishopric."

By a flight of twenty-two stone steps we were led into a grotto beneath the church, where the reputed tomb of the Baptist was pointed out to us. And the vault in which the tomb stands is affirmed to be the prison in which the faithful reprovcr of wickedness in high places was confined before his execution. But of this there are grave doubts.

The other object of interest in connection with this place is found in the number of old columns of the ancient city that remain, some standing erect and others prostrate on the ground and partially buried in the earth, amidst rich orchards and groves of olive and fig trees. The columns found on the summit of the hill form three rows, thirty-two paces apart, while less than two paces intervene between the columns. They measure seven feet nine inches in circumference; but there is no trace of the order of their architecture, nor are there any foundations to be seen, nor indications of the nature of the edifice to which they belonged. Some refer them to Herod's Temple of Augustus, and others to a Greek church which once occupied the summit of the hill.

The descent of the hill on the west-south-west side brings the traveller to a very remarkable colonnade, which is easily traceable by a great number of columns, erect or prostrate,

along the side of the hill, and terminating in a heap of ruins near the eastern extremity of the ancient site. These columns are sixteen feet high, two feet in diameter at the base, and one foot eight inches at the top. The capitals have disappeared, but the shafts retain their polish, and when not broken are in good preservation. Eighty-two of these columns are still erect, and the number of them fallen and broken must be much greater. This colonnade, the



COLONNADE AT SAMARIA.

remains of which now stand solitary and mournful in the midst of ploughed fields, belongs, no doubt, to the time of Herod the Great, and must be regarded as part of one of the splendid structures with which he adorned the city.

Samaria must have been a very gem of beauty in the palmy days of its prosperity; and while wandering amidst its mouldering ruins, I thought of Isaiah's graphic reference to it, as thus expressed: "The glorious beauty, which

is on the head of the fat valley, shall be a fading flower, and as the hasty fruit before the summer" (Isa. xxviii. 4).

And there is another prophetic utterance, too, concerning this ancient city, which strikes one with great power as he stands on this hill and looks on these solitary columns shooting up from green grain and clustering vines, and on the piles of heavy stones in the terraced fields, and the great heaps among the olive trees in the valley below. I refer to Micah's striking and fearful prediction, when God says, through him: "*I will make Samaria as an heap of the field, and as plantings of a vineyard; and I will pour down the stones thereof into the valley, and I will discover the foundations thereof*" (Micah i. 6).

This was the place in which some very interesting events took place of which we read in the Bible, especially in the days of those great prophets Elijah and Elisha. It was into the midst of this city that Elisha led a whole army of men who had been sent by the king of Syria to take him prisoner. He prayed to God to smite them with blindness, so that they could not see. And then, instead of their taking him prisoner, he took them all prisoners, and brought them into the midst of the chief city of their enemies. This was the only time in the history of the world when a whole army of soldiers was captured by one man, without striking a blow, and he not a soldier either. See 2nd Kings vi. 8-23.

And here it was, too, that the interesting history of a siege and famine, and the miraculous raising of the siege, occurred, according to the prediction of Elisha, as we read in 2nd Kings vii.

DOTHAN.—In our journey from Samaria to Jenin we passed in sight of Dothan. The country here is very fertile and beautiful. The hills are covered with groves of

olive trees. Among the hills are fertile plains and valleys. In one of these lies Dothan. It is called Tell Dothan, or the hill of Dothan. I looked at this with great pleasure, because of its connection with two very interesting Bible stories. One of these is in the history of Joseph.

The country around Dothan is very fertile now. There is no better pasture for flocks to be found anywhere in Palestine than in the neighbourhood of Dothan. And it seems to have been the same three thousand years ago, when Joseph was a boy. His brethren had large flocks of sheep and other cattle to feed and take care of. When their flocks had used up the pasture found in one place, they were in the habit of moving away to some other place where the pasture was good and plenty. When they left their father's home they led their flocks to Shechem, or Nablus, as it is now called. The fields about Shechem were very fertile, and offered excellent pasture for cattle, just as they do to-day. Jacob sent Joseph out of the vale of Hebron, where he was then living, to go and visit his brethren in Shechem, and to see how they were getting on with their flocks. But before Joseph got there, they had used up the pasture in that neighbourhood, and had gone to Dothan with their flocks. This is about twelve miles from Shechem. Joseph went after them, little dreaming of the great trial that awaited him on his arrival there.

As we rode along in sight of the place, I tried to picture to myself the scene that took place on that day. I suppose that Joseph, to the day of his death, never forgot that day or that place. I thought of the cattle scattered over the fields, enjoying themselves in the rich pasture which they found there. I thought of the sons of Jacob sitting under the shade of some great tree and watching their flocks, just as men are often seen in that country now. I thought of

the boy Joseph, in his "coat of many colours," hurrying on to meet his brethren. As soon as they see him, instead of being glad to have him come with news to them of their father and their home, they say to each other, "Behold, this dreamer cometh!"—and then they make up their minds to kill him. What a cruel disappointment to Joseph, to be stripped of his beautiful coat, to hear them talk of killing him, and to be cast into a deep, empty pit! How sadly he must have felt, and what bitter tears he must have shed in that lonely pit!

I suppose he was not very long there, for the next thing we read of is that "they sat down to eat bread"—(I wonder how they could have had any appetite for food after behaving so cruelly to their poor brother)—"and they lifted up their eyes and looked, and, behold, a company of Ishmaelites came from Gilead, with their camels bearing spicery and balm and myrrh, going to carry it down to Egypt." And then his brethren changed their minds: they concluded to sell Joseph to these men, and let them take him down to Egypt. They thought that this would be the best way to prevent his dreams from coming to pass; and yet, without knowing it, they were taking the very means which were to cause the fulfilment of those dreams. How wonderfully God overrules the thoughts and conduct of men, and even their very wickedness, so as to bring good out of them in the end!

So "they drew and lifted up Joseph out of the pit, and sold him to the Ishmaelites for twenty pieces of silver." Just such may be found along the road there to-day. Dothan is very little changed from what it was in the days of Joseph. If we were to stay there long we might see just such things taking place now as took place then. These Ishmaelites were Arabians; they are now called Bedouins.

Gilead, the country from which they came, is on the eastern side of Jordan. The road from Gilead to Egypt still passes by Dothan ; and companies—or caravans, as they are called—of these Arabs may often be seen now, with their camels, going down to Egypt. Their dress is just the same now that it was then. Yes, and you will find them carrying just the same things to sell in Egypt now that were carried then : spices and balm and myrrh are still the things in which they chiefly trade. And if a company of shepherds should offer to sell a smart boy to some of these travelling merchants, as Joseph's brethren did, they would be just as willing to make a bargain of this kind now as they were then. How strange it seems to us that, after more than *thirty-five hundred years* have passed away, the customs and dress, and everything connected with the people of that country, should remain so entirely unchanged !

It is not known with certainty what the "balm" was that is here spoken of. It is supposed to have been a sort of gum that was procured from some of the trees that grew in that country. Gilead was always celebrated for the balm which it yielded. It was so in Joseph's days ; and it was the same in the time of the prophet Jeremiah : he compares God's grace to this balm when he asks the question—"Is there no *balm* in *Gilead* ? is there no physician there ? why then is not the health of the daughter of my people recovered ?" (Jer. viii. 22.)

And when we think of this history of Joseph, and see how wonderfully God overruled everything connected with it for good, it should teach us to trust in God at all times ; and when we cannot understand what he is doing, we should wait with patience, and in the end we shall be ready to say, as the people said who saw our Saviour's miracles while he was on earth—"he hath done all things well."

There is another Bible incident which adds much to the interest of this locality. Elisha was living here at one period of his history. It was from Dothan that he sent information on several occasions to Ahab at Samaria of the movements that the king of Syria was planning against him at Damascus. Enraged at the failure of his successive designs, he sent an army to make a prisoner of the prophet. A great host, with chariots and horses, came and surrounded Elisha in his hillside home at Dothan. When the servant of the man of God rose in the morning he was alarmed, as well he might be, to see this beleaguering host quite surrounding the hill. The situation looked desperate: escape seemed impossible. Natural enough was his exclamation, "Alas, my master, what shall we do?" "Fear not," said the prophet; "they that be with us are more than they that be with them." Then came the prophet's prayer that his servant's eyes might be opened; and then he had that wondrous vision of "the mountain full of chariots of fire and horses of fire round about Elisha." It was here that Elisha smote that great host with blindness, and led them along the road we have just traversed into the city of Samaria (2 Kings vi. 13-23).

THE FIRST VIEW OF HERMON.—As we turned reluctantly away from this interesting locality to pursue our journey, we got our first view of Mount Hermon. Far up to the north, robed in a glorious mantle of snow, in solemn, silent grandeur, it seemed to be standing sentinel over all that upper portion of "this goodly land." It was a beautiful sight—refreshing to the eye, and one the picture of which lingers enchantingly in memory's chamber. This rapid succession of lovely scenes and sacred objects made the whole of our afternoon's ride a source of unmingled enjoyment and delight: it was a continual feast. We turned

away from Dothan, indeed, and lost sight of that ; but still there was Hermon before us—an object of real sublimity in its beauty and its grandeur.


JENIN.—By the close of the afternoon we reached our stopping-place. This was the town of Jenin. It lies hid away in a ravine on the southern border of the great plain of Esdraelon. Gardens and orchards surround the town. These, with the town itself, owe their flourishing character to the fountain which bursts out in the midst of the valley. The town takes its name from this fountain. Jenin (originally En-Gannim, or Ain-Gannim) denotes “the fountain of gardens,” and is so called from the flourishing orchards which anciently, as well as now, distinguished the place. And this fountain is the most distant permanent source of “that ancient river, the river Kishon.” Jenin is the usual stopping-place and the chief town between Nablus and Nazareth. It contains about two thousand inhabitants, who are nearly all Moslems. It deals largely in all the products of the country, and with the Bedouin on the east of the Jordan. It was a Levitical city of the tribe of Issachar (Joshua xix. 21 ; xxi. 29), and is mentioned by Josephus under the name of Ginæa. The people are fanatical, rude, and rebellious. They are almost always fighting among themselves or with their neighbours.

A BRAVE DEFENDER.—After reaching our encampment, our dragoman told us that the people of the village were so quarrelsome and thievish that it was never safe to stop a night there without an extra guard, and that he had engaged the brother of the sheik of the village to occupy this responsible post. This man was a great, tall, athletic-looking fellow, but a deaf mute. While we were taking our dinner he came into our tent, brandishing a revolver. He expressed to us by signs how safely we might lie down and

rest, because he, brave fellow as he was, by aid of that revolver would protect us from all harm. Directly after, our waiter, Dominicho, came in and informed us that the guard had borrowed this revolver from our dragoman, Ali Solomon, but that he stood in mortal dread of the weapon he had flourished before us so heroically—that he refused to touch it till *all the charges were withdrawn from it!* With such a champion for our defender, what cause could there be for fear?

CHAPTER XI.

FROM JENIN TO MOUNT CARMEL—THE PLAIN OF ESDRAELON—THE MOUNTAINS OF GILBOA—LITTLE HERMON—SHUNEM—NAIN—ENDOR—MOUNT TABOR—NAZARETH—A SUNDAY AT NAZARETH—MOUNT CARMEL.

HE PLAIN OF ESDRAELON. — Jenin, where we spent the last night, is the entrance to the great plain of Esdraelon. We had anticipated our ride across this plain with great interest. This feeling naturally suggested the hope and desire for a fine, clear day to enjoy the ride; but before retiring to rest for the night in our encampment at Jenin, we had observed with no little anxiety that the sky was covered with thick clouds, as if preparing for another rainy spell. Our anticipations for the morrow, accordingly, were not of the brightest or most sanguine character.

The next morning, feeling too uneasy about the weather to sleep much, I rose before five o'clock, and on peeping out of the tent-door found to my great delight a perfectly clear sky overhead, which the sun was already beginning to tinge with the faint traces of his early hues. We took an early breakfast, so as to secure a good start for a long day's ride, from which we were anticipating the highest possible enjoyment. The weather favoured us completely. The day was perfectly delightful: we had a clear blue sky, a sparkling sun, the air cool and balmy, the scenery mag-

nificent, and the historical associations on every hand of the most deeply stirring character. The plain of Esdraelon lay before us—the great battle-field of Palestine.

This plain of Esdraelon is interesting for several reasons. In the first place, it is a very *large* plain. To be sure, if we should compare it with one of the broad prairies of America, it would seem small enough—it is about thirty miles long and twenty broad; but when compared with the size of the country to which it belongs, we may well speak of it as large. From the foot of the mountains of Gilboa on the east this famous plain stretches away, clear across the country, to the shores of the Mediterranean Sea on the west; and from the country around Samaria on the south it runs up as far as Mount Hermon on the north. Hermon is the highest mountain in Palestine, except Lebanon, on the northern border. When we saw it, its top was covered with snow; and as I looked at it, it seemed to me to stand like a sentinel, with a white mantle wrapped about him, keeping watch over this beautiful plain.

In the next place, this plain is very *beautiful*. Two things help to make up this beauty. One of these is the numerous mountains that rise out of the plain or stand around it; the other is the fertility of the soil. Let us look at these mountains. If you stand anywhere on this beautiful plain and look toward "*the great sea westward*"—as the Mediterranean is called in the Bible—Mount Carmel appears in sight, with the other mountains in its range. Far away to the north, what Moses calls "the goodly mountains of Lebanon" may be dimly seen. And then there are the Great Hermon, of which we have just spoken; and "Little Hermon," of which David speaks in the Psalms; and Tabor and Gilboa;—all interesting mountains, and all adding very much to the beauty of this plain.

The *fertility* of this plain, as well as the mountains about it, helps to make it beautiful. The soil here is very rich. It was in the early spring when we visited it. In some parts of it there were large fields covered with grain, which was springing up and waving gracefully in the wind as it swept by. In other places the fields were carpeted with flowers—wild flowers—of every variety of form and colour. These were praising God, as the flowers always do, by showing his wisdom and goodness in seeking to make us happy by causing such beautiful things to grow where he might have left the ground all barren and bare, or covered only with grass or weeds. All travellers unite in testifying to the extraordinary fertility of this plain. One tells us that “on entering the plain his eye could not be satisfied with gazing. It was the season of spring; the air was bland and balmy; the blue mountains around—Carmel, Tabor, Little Hermon, and Gilboa—rose in their stateliness, and the words of the 89th Psalm were continually before me, ‘Tabor and Hermon shall rejoice in Thy name.’ The plain is a field of grain which no man’s hand sows and no man’s hand reaps.”

THE MOUNTAINS OF GILBOA.—As we entered the plain, and for the first hour and a half of our journey, we were riding along with the range of Gilboa’s barren mountains directly on our right. I looked upon those sacred mountains with a feeling of very great interest. They are about twenty-two hundred feet above the level of the sea, and about twelve hundred feet above the plain out of which they rise.

Here it was that Saul found himself cast *off*, as well as cast *down* and despairing, on the eve of his last fatal battle. Finding that he could get no answer from the Lord, whom he had rejected, he stole away by night to

Endor, and sought the witch's aid to bring up Samuel to answer his anxious question about the issue of the next day's conflict. How touching the words of the despairing monarch, when Samuel asked why he had brought him up: "*I am sore distressed; for the Philistines make war against me, and God is departed from me, and answereth me no more, neither by prophets, nor by dreams.*" Alas! how vain to seek for comfort anywhere when God withholds it from us! Saul felt, how deeply, then, the bitterness of that curse: "*Woe unto them when I depart from them!*" The fatal battle is joined the next day, and Saul and his sons are slain, giving occasion to David's peerless and pathetic elegy: "The beauty of Israel is slain upon thy high places: how are the mighty fallen!"

Not a tree is to be seen upon the whole range of Gilboa; and its prevailing barrenness, except a strip of green along its base, would seem to favour the idea that the influence of David's imprecation rests there still: "Ye mountains of Gilboa, let there be no dew, neither let there be rain upon you, nor fields of offerings; for there the shield of the mighty is vilely cast away, the shield of Saul, as though he had not been anointed with oil" (2 Sam. i. 21).

JEZREEL.—After passing these mountains, we came to the ruins of Jezreel, now a wretched village, though once the royal abode of Ahab and the kings of Israel. There is nothing royal about it now, except its situation, which is certainly very fine. From the north and east sides tall, dark mountains cast their shadows. To the west and south the magnificent Esdraelon stretches away, surrounded by the mountains of Galilee, "the excellency of Carmel," and the fat hills of Samaria. There is little to claim attention in the city itself. It never could have been large or splendid.

Near here was Naboth's vineyard, which the king coveted, and Jezebel gave to him all stained with innocent blood. And here, as he went by to take possession, the stern prophet Elijah met him, and poured into his tingling ear one of the most curdling messages ever uttered by mortal lips. (1 Kings xxi. 19-25.) It was over this plain that Jehu the son of Nimshi came "driving furiously," as the executioner of God's wrath. And here, too, the infamous Jezebel met her well-deserved but terrible fate: "*the dogs shall eat Jezebel in the portion of Jezreel.*"

From the ruins of Jezreel we rode to the fountain of Ain Jaleed, a large stream of beautiful, clear water issuing from a fine grotto at the rocky base of Gilboa. The stream runs across the plain and falls into "that ancient river, the river Kishon." The point of special interest about this stream is, that it was here that Gideon was crossing with his 10,000 faint-hearted men, when, by "the three hundred men that crossed," God chose to work out deliverance to Israel. We drove our horses into the stream, and thought of Gideon and his little band of heroes, and felt tempted to raise once more the old battle-cry, "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon!"

LITTLE HERMON.—From the banks of this stream we rode across a portion of the plain and made the ascent of Little Hermon. The view from the top is very extensive. It commands the whole plain. Before you, in the distance, you see Mount Carmel by the sea. On the other hand you look down on the whole range of Gilboa, which has just been passed. In another direction you catch glimpses of the river Jordan, with the dark mountains of Moab beyond; while to the north are seen the hills of Galilee, with Nazareth in view on the southern slope.

On this broad plain what stirring scenes have been

witnessed ! Here Barak and Deborah gained their victory over Sisera and his mighty host; here Gideon's little band broke their pitchers and rushed victoriously on their astonished foes; here Israel and the Philistines often fought; here Josiah was defeated and killed by Pharaoh Necho; and here the tide of war has continued to surge even down to modern times, when the French Marshal Kleber, with 6000 men, held his ground against ten times the number for six long hours, till Napoleon came to his aid and swept the Turks away. This field has been the scene of nearly all the battles of Syria.

We stopped to lunch on the summit of Little Hermon, with a glorious landscape all around us, and felt the inspiration of the scene. That noonday rest in the midst of so magnificent a panorama has left an impression that can never be effaced.

SHUNEM.—A short distance from the foot of the mountains, and immediately below us, so that we could look down upon it, lay Shunem, the scene of one of the most interesting episodes in the life of Elisha. How vividly the story of the Shunammite and her son came up before us, while the actual scene where it all transpired lay full in view. There was the village in which "the great woman" lived, and where she "built the little chamber on the wall" for the use of the prophet. Into one of those corn-fields that surround the village the child of promise "went out to his father to the reapers;" and there it was, when the sun smote him, that he cried "My head, my head!" and was carried home to his mother to die on her knees. I never understood, in its full force, till journeying through this land, the expression of the Psalmist when he says, "The sun shall not *smite* thee by day." I rode with an umbrella over my head all the time; and on two

occasions, when neglecting this precaution for half a day, I came very near having a sun-stroke.

It was across yonder great plain that the Shunammite mother rode in the afternoon of that memorable day to the blue ridge of Carmel, to tell the prophet of her sad bereavement; and across it she returned again "with the man of God," to receive from him her son, thus doubly the gift of Heaven to her.

NAIN.—On our descent from the mountain we came to Nain, the city where Jesus met the funeral procession, and cheered the heart of the sorrowing widow by restoring her dead son to her arms. Its houses are few and poor, and its situation bleak and uninteresting, though commanding a wide view over the plain and among the mountains of Galilee. A few hundred paces above the houses are many rock tombs in the hill-side, the site, perhaps, of the cemetery in which the widow's son was to have been buried. There is nothing of special interest about the place itself, but with what a charm the associations of the gospel history invest it! It does not require a very strong imagination to picture the funeral procession coming out of the city—the men carrying the open bier, the women behind, grouped around the bereaved widow, and rending the air with their cries, as they do still. Another procession meets them. He who leads it directs a glance of more than human compassion on the widow, and says in tenderest tones, "Weep not." He approaches and touches the bier. The bearers stand still, for there is something in the bearing of the stranger that awes them. Jesus says, "Young man, I say unto thee, Arise." And he that was dead sits up and begins to speak. And he delivers him to his mother.

At the ruins of this village our company parted for the

rest of the day, only one of them, with the dragoman and myself, wishing to ride across the plain and ascend Mount Tabor—our only chance of doing so; the rest preferring to hasten to their tents at Nazareth, already visible in the distance.

ENDOR.—In going to the foot of Tabor, we rode by Endor,



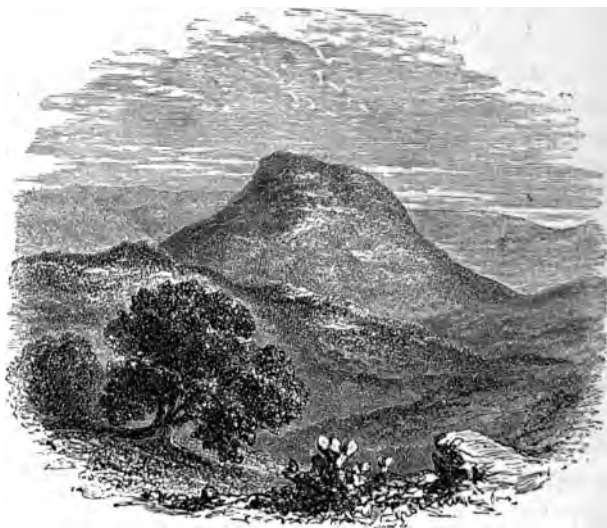
VILLAGE OF NAIN, AND LITTLE HERMON.

where Saul in the depth of his despair consulted the witch on the night before the fatal battle of Gilboa. The only remarkable things here are the caverns hewn in the cliffs above the village. They are rude, irregular excavations, the object of which it is difficult to determine, though they strike one forcibly as a fit habitation for one who professed to have dealings with the spirits of the departed. "The whole

place," says Dr. Thomson, "is in most striking accord with its ancient story; and those old hags grinning at us from the yawning mouths of their blackened habitations look more like witches than women. Hark how they curse the *fathers and grandfathers* of us Christian dogs—a kind of salutation that you never hear now but from the very vilest people of the country. Whether witches or not, they are undoubtedly 'possessed,' and we may just as well pass out of their sight. See, here are a dozen little calves at the mouth of this cave, kept up from their mothers, who are at pasture under the care of the shepherd. I do not mean that there is anything unusual in this, but merely that just such a calf did the witch kill for Saul on that dismal night when he sought her dwelling."

MOUNT TABOR.—It took us five hours' hard riding to cross the plain, make the ascent of Tabor, and reach our encampment at Nazareth; but we felt fully recompensed for the toil in visiting the traditional though disputed scene of the transfiguration. The ascent of Tabor is interesting from its richness and fertility. A carpet of grass covers the slopes of the mount all the way up, and oaks and olive trees abound even to the summit. The mountain stands separated from all others, with smooth, unbroken sides, and is equally an object of beauty whether looked at from a distance or near at hand. The height of the mount, as given by different writers, varies from eight hundred to fourteen hundred feet. The view from the top is very interesting and extensive. "The plain of Esdraelon is the most striking feature. The eye takes in at a glance, from the base of the hill at our feet to the ridge of Carmel on the west, an unbroken sea of verdure. 'Little Hermon' is before us on the south, with Nain and Endor on its side, and the top of Gilboa appearing over it; on the east is a large stretch

of the Jordan valley, and a long wall of the mountains of Gilead beyond. The outline of the volcanic basin in which the Sea of Galilee lies is distinctly traced, though only a small portion of the lake is visible. Beyond it we can see how the table-land of Bashan runs back from the brow of the high, eastern bank. Hermon is still there, a towering cone capped with snow ; and the southern roots of the



MOUNT TABOR.

Lebanon range around Safed are there also. The whole country from Tabor to the Sea of Galilee appears like an undulating plain."

Tabor is often spoken of in Scripture. It was here that Barak drew together "ten thousand men of the children of Naphtali, and of the children of Zebulun," to fight with Sisera, the captain of Jabin's army. Tabor is one of the

natural strongholds of the land. Its beauty became proverbial. Its graceful outline and wooded slopes and grassy glades made it the subject of universal admiration. Hence Jeremiah (xli. 18) uses this expression: "As Tabor among the mountains, and Carmel by the sea." As Hermon was the representative of the mountains in the north, so was Tabor of the south. "The north and the south thou hast created them: Tabor and Hermon shall rejoice in thy name" (Ps. lxxxix. 12).

Whether the transfiguration really took place here, is a question that cannot be satisfactorily determined. I am disposed to concur entirely in Dr. Thomson's views on this point, as thus expressed: "If I hesitate to admit the claims of Tabor to the honour of the transfiguration, it is not from anything in the mount itself. No more noble or appropriate theatre for such a glorious manifestation could be found or desired. Nor does the fact that there may have been a village or a fortress on the top at that time present any difficulty. There are many secluded and densely-wooded terraces on the north and north-east sides admirably adapted to the scenes of the transfiguration. I have been delighted to wander through some of them, and certainly regretted that my early faith in this site had been disturbed by prying critics; but after reading all that they have advanced against the current tradition, I am not fully convinced. You can examine this vexed question at your leisure, and have as good a right to form an independent opinion on it as anybody else, for all that is known about it is found in Matthew xvii., Mark ix., and Luke ix., which you can see at a glance contain nothing very decisive against the claims of Tabor. The topographical indications are very uncertain and obscure."

On descending from Mount Tabor we rode along the side

of the intervening mountains to our camp in the fields outside of the city of Nazareth, and reached the camp about sundown, thoroughly wearied, but intensely delighted with the day's excursion.

A SUNDAY AT NAZARETH.—Sunday was spent in resting in our encampment near the well outside the city of Nazareth. That Sabbath in this scene of the youthful days of our great Redeemer was one long to be remembered. This locality is so full of sacred associations connected with the early life of Jesus, as to make a sojourn here particularly interesting.

AN ORIENTAL FUNERAL.—Our tent was pitched near a graveyard. The space was not enclosed, and only the raised mounds and the rude monumental stones marked it as a place where the dead were laid. Just after breakfast a funeral procession came from Nazareth to this burial spot. We drew near to witness the scene. It was an infant, apparently about twelve or eighteen months old, that was to be laid in its last resting-place. The mother bore the corpse in her arms to the grave. It was dressed in its ordinary clothes, and wrapped up in a sort of shawl or mantle. When the grave was reached, the mother took the lifeless form of her little one from the mantle that covered it, pressed it passionately to her bosom, covered it with kisses, gazed fondly on its pale little face, and then resigning it to those who stood by, turned away with a wild burst of touching grief and went back to her desolate home, as if unable to stand and see her darling consigned to its resting-place in the cold, damp ground. My heart was deeply moved by that poor mother's sorrow, and I longed to speak to her of that tender, sympathizing Saviour, that "Jesus of Nazareth," who said, "Suffer the little children to come unto me;" and who, "when he had overcome the sharpness of death,

opened the kingdom of heaven to all " infants, as truly as to all " believers."

A UNION MEETING.—There was no worship in English at Nazareth that day, and so we had service in our own tent in the morning. Three companies of American tourists were encamped at Nazareth on that Sabbath. Our friend and brother, the Rev. Dr. March, opened his tent for divine service in the afternoon, and sent a kind invitation to his fellow-travellers in the other tents to come and join in the exercises. A company of about thirty Americans gathered in and around the good doctor's tent. Methodists, Baptists, and Episcopalians were represented in that assembly; but love to our common Saviour made them forget all minor differences between them, and feel that they were members of one great family in Jesus Christ.

The Rev. Dr. Calhoun, a missionary of the American Board, conducted the meeting. It was opened with singing and prayer. Then a passage of Scripture was read which referred to the early life of Jesus of Nazareth. Some appropriate remarks were made by Dr. Calhoun on the passage. After this it was thrown open for remarks by others. One after another spoke on the theme presented, so appropriate to the time and place. For about an hour and a half the exercises were continued in a lively and profitable way, interspersed with singing and prayer. Bishop Kingsley, of the Methodist Church, was present and took part in the services. When he rose to speak I was struck with the ruddy, healthful appearance of that faithful servant of God. He seemed like one of the strongest and most robust men in that little company. As I listened to the words of wisdom that fell from his lips on the afternoon of that quiet Sabbath, how little I dreamed that it was the last occasion on which he was to speak in public for the

honour of his Master! And when, not many days afterwards, I heard of his sudden and lamented death at Beyrout, it brought up afresh to my recollection the memory of that delightful meeting at Nazareth, with the simplicity and earnestness of his address; and I thought, while mourning for the Church's loss, in the removal from it of so faithful and devoted a minister in the prime of his days, what a blessed change it was for him to pass at once from the earthly to the heavenly Canaan—from the home of Christ in the days of his humiliation, to his position in glory at the right hand of the throne of God.

A WALK ABOUT NAZARETH.—At the close of the afternoon we took a walk through the town of Nazareth. In visiting the homes of distinguished persons, we generally expect to find incidents connected with their early life; but we find nothing of this kind at Nazareth. It has been well said by some one, that "*there remains not one acknowledged anecdote of the life of Jesus during all the thirty years spent at Nazareth.*" A profound silence rests on all those years. We have just one glance at the boyhood of Jesus. But this took place at Jerusalem, and not at Nazareth. I refer to the scene in the Temple, with its interesting circumstances, as given in Luke ii. 41–52. This only increases our desire to know more of the boyhood of Jesus at Nazareth. But God has thrown the veil of oblivion over those years, and we cannot lift that veil.

The population of Nazareth is about four thousand. It lies in a valley on the side of a hill, answering exactly to the description given by Luke (iv. 29) of the angry crowd that broke up the synagogue service and "led Jesus to the brow of the hill whereon the city was built, that they might cast him down headlong."

I have no faith whatever in the reputed sacred localities

pointed out to travellers in Nazareth. There cannot be a shadow of doubt that the Church of the Annunciation, the

NAZARETH.



cave exhibited as the *kitchen* of Mary, the *workshop* of Joseph, the *dining-table* of our Lord and his apostles, the

synagogue where he read the prophet Isaiah, and the hill claimed to be the *Mount of Precipitation*, two miles away from the town, are altogether fabulous, and have no claim whatever to our veneration or respect.

After rambling through the town, we climbed up the hill, or ridge of hills, behind it, so as to get a view of Nazareth from above and of the surrounding country. The elevation of this ridge is about four or five hundred feet. The descent immediately below the crest of the hill is quite abrupt, so that it would not be difficult to find places from which if a man were thrown over he would have a headlong fall. We sat down on "the brow of the hill," at the quiet sunset hour, to meditate on the scene before us, so rich in hallowed associations. There was a feeling of intense reality about everything here. The Nazareth of to-day undoubtedly occupies the same locality with the Nazareth of eighteen hundred years ago, when Jesus was on earth. Over those fields the boy Jesus had played with his companions. Up this very hill doubtless he had often climbed. Where we are sitting he may have often sat, and gazed on this same landscape spread out in beauty before us now. It was pleasant, indeed, to linger on such a spot and indulge in such thoughts. But, apart from these associations, the view from that hill behind Nazareth is very interesting. It is one of the most varied and extensive that Palestine affords. It overlooks the beautiful plain of Esdraelon, and takes in the snowy peak of Hermon, the rounded summit of Tabor, the long, dark ridge of Carmel, and beyond it the white strand of the Mediterranean. The recollection of that scene of beauty, as we gazed upon it at the sunset hour of that sweet Sabbath, will long retain its hold upon our memories.

MOUNT CARMEL.—Nazareth is a convenient point from

which to visit this interesting spot. If you were traveling through the Holy Land, up from the south to the north, when you got about halfway through your journey you would find a large range of mountains. It forms the western boundary of the great plain of Esdraelon. This range runs up in a northwestwardly direction, and juts out into the sea. In some parts of this range the mountains are as high as twelve hundred feet. But this end of it, by the seaside, which is Mount Carmel, is only between five and six hundred feet high.

The meaning of the word Carmel is, *the vineyard of God*. By this the Jews would understand a very fruitful vineyard. Carmel used to be very fruitful and very beautiful. There is no doubt what the prophet means when he speaks of "the glory of Lebanon" and "the excellency of Carmel" (Isa. xxxv. 2). It is not as fertile as it used to be. But still some parts of this range are very fertile yet; and the view from the top of this Mount Carmel in our picture is very beautiful. You have the deep blue waters of the Mediterranean Sea on one side, and on the other the rich and fertile plain of Esdraelon, with the snow-capped summit of Hermon and the Lebanon mountains appearing in the distance.

In old times, people in Eastern countries used to look upon all the tops of mountains as sacred places. They loved to offer sacrifices and engage in worship there. This explains the many references we find in the Old Testament to what are called "*high places*." The heathen were fond of building their altars and setting up the images of their idols in those places.

Mount Carmel was considered a particularly sacred place. There used to be an altar to the God of Israel on the top of Carmel. There was also a place there for the worship

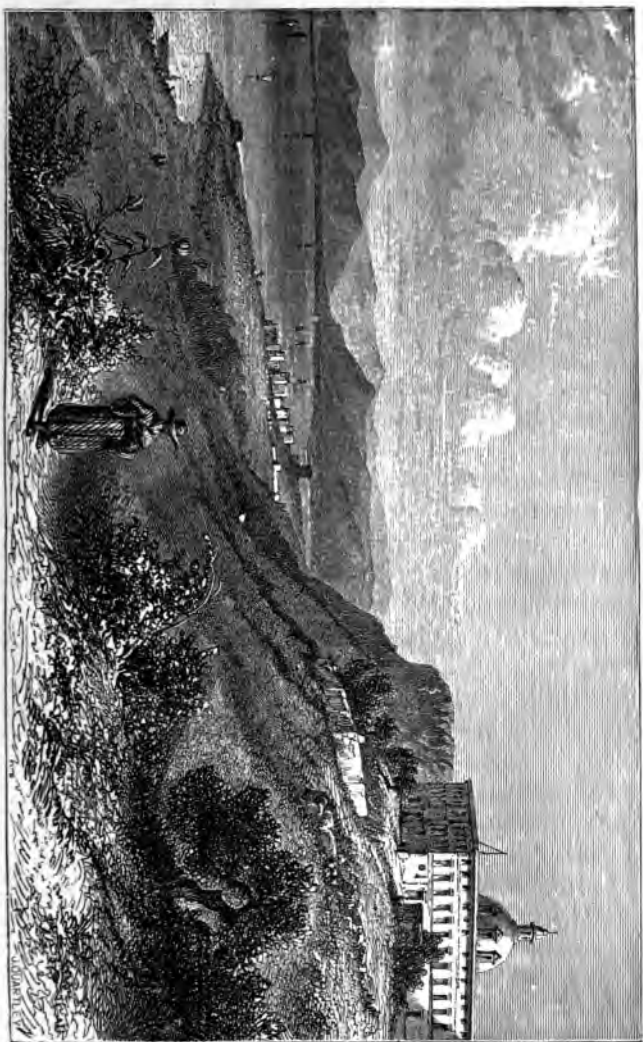
of the idol Baal. And this idea of its being a sort of sacred place is still kept up. In our picture you see a building on the top of the mount. This is a convent. There is a church also connected with it. This convent is a large square building, with a handsome cupola. The monks keep it as a sort of hotel for the convenience of travellers; and a very comfortable place it is. The air is cool and bracing even in the heat of summer. In the church is a cave, in which it is said that Elijah hid himself from "that wicked woman Jezebel."

There never was a time in the history of Israel when idolatry prevailed more among them than in the days of the prophet Elijah. Ahab, who was king of Israel then, was a very wicked man, and had married a woman who was more wicked than himself. She was a great worshipper of the idol Baal, and she did all she could to make the Israelites a nation of idolaters. She threw down the altars of the God of Israel, killed his prophets, and tried to make the people stop worshipping him.

God was very angry with the Israelites for worshipping idols. He resolved to punish them for it. One of the ways in which he did this was by sending a famine. There was no rain in the land for three years and a half. This brought great suffering on the nation. The fields and gardens all dried up. Most of the cattle died, and the people were in great distress.

Then, at last, God resolved to show the people the folly of idolatry in a very remarkable way. He sent Elijah to Ahab, to tell him to gather all the people of Israel together at Mount Carmel. The prophets of Baal, too, were to come with them.

They met there in great multitudes. Elijah proposed a plan to them to prove whether Baal or Jehovah were the



true God. He said: "Let Baal's prophets make an offering to him on his altar, and I will make an offering to the Lord on his altar. Let neither of us put any fire under our offering. Let them call on Baal, and I will call on the Lord; and whoever shall answer our prayer by sending fire down from heaven on the offering, we will agree to acknowledge that he is the true God."

This was fair enough. The people agreed to it. Baal's prophets began first. They prepared their offering, and then prayed a long time for the fire to come. But none came. Then Elijah mocked them. He said, "Pray louder. Perhaps Baal has gone on a journey, or maybe he is taking a nap and needs to be waked up." Then they prayed louder, and leaped on their altar, and cut themselves with knives till the blood gushed out. But yet no answer came.

Then Elijah's turn came. He built up the altar of God, which had been thrown down. Then he arranged the offering upon it. When this was done, he ordered nine barrels of water to be poured all over it, so as to show that there was no deception. Then he kneeled down and prayed. And while he was praying, the fire fell down from heaven in the sight of all the people. It licked up all the water and consumed the burnt-offering. When the people saw this, they gave a great shout and cried, "The Lord, he is God! The Lord, he is God!"

Then Elijah had all the prophets of Baal taken at once and put to death. After this he resolved to pray for rain. And he fully expected that the rain would be sent. While he was praying, he sent his servant up the mount to look toward the sea for signs of rain. He came back and said there was nothing to be seen. Elijah told him to go again seven times. At last he came back and said he saw "a

little cloud arise out of the sea, like a man's hand." From this Elijah knew that the rain was coming; so he sent word to King Ahab to make haste and drive home before the rain stopped him.

In the meantime that little cloud had spread out all over the heavens, and there was the sound of an abundance of rain. Ahab had about twenty miles to drive to his home in the city of Jezreel; and Elijah girded up his clothes and ran before the king's chariot faster than his horses could run. You can read all about this interesting event in 1st Kings xviii.

This incident teaches us several useful lessons :—

In the first place, it shows us that we never should be discouraged in our efforts to do good. Elijah got discouraged; and we can't wonder at it. All the other prophets of the Lord had been killed, and he was left alone. Everybody was afraid to help him or show him any favour, while the king and the queen were set against him, and were trying to kill him. But God told him not to be discouraged, and sent him to Mount Carmel to make this experiment. He made it; and it led to great good, and turned many of the people back to the Lord their God. And so, even if we stand alone in trying to do good, we need not be afraid. The God of Elijah will be with us, as he was with him; and "*if God be for us, who can be against us?*"

In the second place, this subject teaches us a good lesson about the power of prayer. The apostle James uses the example of Elijah at Mount Carmel for this very purpose (James v. 17, 18). He shows us that though he was only a man, like other men, yet he was able by prayer to shut up the windows of heaven, and keep them shut so that there should be no rain for three years and a half, and then to open them again. Prayer has lost none of its power

since then. God is as able and as willing to answer prayer now as he was when Elijah was on earth. Let us believe in the power of prayer, and practise this belief.

And then this subject teaches us to show respect for persons in authority, even though it be necessary to reprove them for their sins. This was what Elijah meant to do by running before the chariot of the king. This is done in Eastern countries to the present day. When in Egypt, I was much interested to see every carriage in which a rich or great man rode, with an Arab youth, girded round the waist as Elijah was, running before it. This is done as a mark of respect or honour. And it was just this that Elijah intended to show towards Ahab. He had been obliged to reprove him for the sin of idolatry. And then he wished to show that, though he had done this, he was yet ready to pay all due respect to him as his king and ruler. The same authority which bids us "*fear God*," also commands us to "*honour the king*." And we do this when we show respect to our rulers, as Elijah did.

CHAPTER XII.

FROM NAZARETH TO CAPERNAUM—CANA OF GALILEE—THE MOUNT OF
BEATITUDES—TIBERIAS—THE SEA OF GALILEE AND ITS RUINED
CITIES.

RETURNING to Nazareth, we left this interesting spot in the morning, after an early breakfast, for the Lake of Tiberias, on the shores of which we were next to pitch our tents. It is an easy ride of five or six hours, and though not so full of interest as some other journeys, it still led us through several places that are worthy of notice by students of Bible history and geography.

CANA OF GALILEE.—The first of these that we came to in this day's excursion was the little village of Kefr Kenna. This is one of the two sites which set up rival claims to be the "Cana of Galilee" where Jesus turned the water into wine. Though entering into no discussion of the relative claims of these two places, and presuming not to determine which is the genuine one, I yet looked on Kefr Kenna with all the interest one would feel in such a locality if there were no rival to its honour. The village is prettily situated on the side of a shallow vale. It has some ruins of ancient buildings, and some tolerably respectable modern ones, and, above all places in this vicinity, abounds in flourishing orchards of pomegranates. But it is dirty and squalid, as all the villages of this country are. There is a

total absence everywhere of those evidences of thrift, of neatness and comfort, which we always connect with the idea of country villages in America or in England. I do not remember to have seen a village in Palestine that looked much better than a collection of pigsties. At the outskirts of the village we halted and dismounted from our horses by a well that yielded an abundant supply of clear, sweet water. And if this were the Cana of the New Testament, it was from this well that the servants drew the water used at the marriage-feast which Jesus honoured by his presence.

Of course we sought out the reputed house in which the marriage took place. The room in which Jesus began the display of his wonder-working power is fitted up as a chapel, and two huge stone vessels, like great boilers, are shown as part of the identical "water-pots of stone, containing two or three firkins apiece," in which was "the conscious water, that saw its God and blushed." And regarding this locality as the probable one where Jesus performed "this beginning of miracles, and manifested forth his glory," who could fail to look upon it with deep and heartfelt interest?

Dr. Thomson has some very natural observations on this interesting locality, which may well be quoted here:—

"There is not now a habitable house in the humble village where our blessed Lord sanctioned by his presence and miraculous power the all-important and world-wide institution of marriage. This is a curious fact, and suggests some most instructive reflections. Innumerable millions, in their happiest hours, have had their thoughts and hearts directed to Cana. A poor, insignificant village indeed, and yet there is that about it which the proudest cities on earth might envy. Nineveh and Babylon, and a thousand other

names, may be forgotten ; but not Cana of Galilee. It may even come to pass that Paris, and London, and New York will be dropped out of mind, and their very sites be lost ; but to the end of the world and time, whenever and wherever there shall be heard the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride, then and there will Cana of Galilee be remembered. Some names we pronounce with honour, some with shame and sorrow, and many with cold indifference ; but *Cana* will ever mingle in the song of the happy, to symbolize the peace and purity of domestic happiness—the bliss of wedded love.”

As we rode away from Cana of Galilee, it seemed very natural to think about the different ways in which Jesus taught the people while he was on earth. He began his public teaching by his wonderful Sermon on the Mount. That is the greatest sermon that ever was preached. But Jesus preached a great many other sermons besides. He went about preaching all the time. He taught the people by the sermons that he preached. He taught them by the parables he delivered. He taught them by the conversations he had with them, as he sat in their houses, and walked with them by the way. But Jesus taught the people by what he *did*, as well as by what he said. Every miracle was like a sermon. And so it was with this first miracle at Cana of Galilee. Many lessons were taught by it.

Let us look at three of these lessons.

Here is a *lesson about the power of Jesus*. There are the six water-pots of stone. They are filled with water “*up to the brim*.” There was nothing in them but water. There was no room to put anything else in ; and yet in a moment all that water is turned to wine. Jesus did not speak a word. He did not touch the water-pots, nor move

a finger towards them. He simply desired or willed the water in them to turn to wine, and immediately what he wished to have done was done. A moment ago those pots were full of water, and now they are full of wine. And it was the best wine that ever was drunk. When the governor of the feast tasted it, he was surprised. He spoke to the bridegroom about it. He said that people generally gave their friends the best wine they had at the beginning of a feast; after a while they brought out that which was poorer; but now the good wine had been kept to the last. That was wine that had no alcohol in it. It would not make any one drunk, or do harm in any way. How wonderful the power of Jesus that could enable him to do this! When we think of the first miracle, we may well remember the lesson it teaches us about the power of Jesus.

Another lesson which this miracle teaches us is about *the love of Jesus*. It was the love of Jesus that made him willing to come into our world. And when he came into it, it was his love that led him to "go about doing good." When we really love people, this feeling will lead us to try all we can to make them happy and to bless them. And this was just what Jesus came into our world for. This was what he remained in it for, also. And in all the miracles he performed during his ministry he had just this end in view. When he opened the eyes of the blind, and loosed the tongue of the dumb, and unstopped the ears of the deaf, and made the lame to walk, and cast out devils, and raised the dead to life again, it was all to show his love to those whom he came to save. He scattered blessings around him all his days, in proof of his love. As he hung upon the cross, he stretched out his hand of love to save the dying thief. And when his work on earth was finished, and

he was going back to heaven, he led his disciples out to the top of the Mount of Olives, and stretched forth his hands to bless them; and while he was blessing them, "a cloud received him out of their sight," and he ascended up to heaven. Thus we see how he began his work on earth by blessing people, and he finished it in the same way. And he made the good wine at Cana of Galilee for the same purpose. He loved the people, and wanted to bless them and make them happy. And so we see how this miracle shows us the love of Jesus.

Another lesson we may learn from this subject is about *the necessity of obedience*. When the mother of Jesus had told him that they had no wine, he did not promise her to make it. But she seemed to feel sure that he would do it, and so she said to the servants, "*Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it.*" And so when Jesus told the servants to fill the water-pots with water, they did it. And when he told them to draw it out and carry it up to the governor, they did so. They obeyed him in everything that he said. And it was *while they were obeying Jesus that he turned the water into wine*. If they had not obeyed him, we have no reason to suppose that he would have made any wine. Let us remember this. Let us learn this lesson of obedience, and while we are trying to obey him he will bless us and do us good in many ways. He can turn the water of our sorrow and trouble into the wine of joy. The way of obedience is the way of blessing. Let us pray that God may help us to walk in this way, and then it will be well with us.

THE TOMB OF JONAH.—Shortly after leaving Cana, we passed a little village called Mashhad, with a striking wely or domed pillar. This name Mashhad is given to the tomb or shrine of some saint or prophet where the people are accustomed to assemble for worship. A very old

tradition—received alike by Christians and Moslems—declares this to be the tomb of Jonah the prophet. If this be so, then this village must occupy the site of Gathhepher, which was Jonah's place of birth and residence.

“THE MOUNT OF BEATITUDES.”—About an hour after this we passed along the base of a saddle-shaped hill on our left, which the Arabs call Kurūn Hattin (“the Horns of Hattin”). This is the traditional “Mount of Beatitudes,” where our Saviour delivered his wonderful “Sermon on the Mount.” It is a smooth, green mount, easy of ascent, and very eligible for such a purpose. The plain around the foot of the mount was carpeted with flowers of every hue, presenting a very beautiful appearance. And if it was in the spring season that that sermon was preached, then, when the “great Teacher wished to use his illustration about the flowers,” he had only to point to the multitudes blooming around when he said: “Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: and yet I say unto you, that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.”

In Acts iii. 26, when the apostle Peter was telling the Jews what Jesus came into the world for, he says: “Unto you first, God, having raised up his Son Jesus, *sent him to bless you.*” And if we bear this saying of Peter in mind while we read the first part of this wonderful sermon on the mount, it will make it seem much more interesting to us. This was the first sermon that Jesus preached. And the first word with which this sermon began was the word “*blessed.*” And then he repeated this word, not two or three times only, but *nine* times. In the first eleven verses of this chapter Jesus speaks about nothing else but blessings. It seems as if he was burdened with the blessings he had brought for those he came to save. His heart was

full of them. He could speak of nothing else till he had spoken freely of these. And as we read these all over, one by one, how beautiful they seem ! They appear like a bouquet of fragrant flowers, or like a casket of rich and sparkling jewels. How tender and loving the heart of Jesus must have been when he could begin his ministry among the very people who he knew would revile him, and persecute him, and put him to a cruel death, by speaking first of all these great and glorious blessings ! How natural and proper it is to speak of the mount on which all these wonderful words are supposed to have been spoken as "*The Mount of Beatitudes*," or "*The Mount of Blessings*."

There is a level space of about a quarter of a mile in extent on the top of the mount ; so there would have been plenty of room there for the disciples and others who gathered round him to listen to the gracious words which fell from his blessed lips.

THE BATTLE OF HATTIN.—This locality was the scene of a very different transaction from that which took place when, if the tradition be true, "the Prince of Peace" gathered his followers around him here in calm tranquillity, to be instructed in the principles of his peaceful kingdom. Here, during the time of the Crusades, a sanguinary battle, and one very disastrous to the soldiers of the Cross, took place in the year 1187. The Christian army was commanded by the king of Jerusalem. The Turks were led by their famous sultan, Saladin. The immediate cause of the battle was a gross infraction of the existing truce by one of the Christian leaders, Raynold of Chatillon. He had plundered a Damascus caravan, and refused to give up either the merchants or the merchandise on the demand of the sultan. The battle was fierce and bloody, but ended

in the total defeat of the Christians. A shattered remnant of their host gathered around their king and the standard of the Cross, and withdrew to the summit of Hill Hattin. Rushing down from the heights, they vainly sought to scatter their enemies. The bravest fell fighting; the remnant left were all made prisoners, including the king, the Grand Master of the Templars, and Raynold of Châtillon, the cause of the conflict, who was put to death by order of Saladin.

THE SEA OF GALILEE.—This was the next object of interest before us. Pursuing our way, while still in full view of the "Mount of Beatitudes" we caught our first sight of the waters of this miniature sea, around which gathers so much that is interesting in the history of our Saviour's life. From the point where it first burst upon our view we had a descent of about a thousand feet to make before we reached our camping-ground on the shores of the lake not far from the walls of Tiberias.

And how did this most classic spot in sacred history strike you, as you first gazed upon it? some may be ready to ask. I answer, Very pleasantly. It has not the natural beauty of Lake George, nor the luxuriant grandeur of some of the Adirondack lakes. And yet it is very beautiful. Murray speaks of it as dreary; but *that* was by no means the impression it made on my mind. It is thirteen miles long, and six miles broad. On the west side the hills of Galilee—not crowned with trees, indeed, yet robed in verdure—slope gracefully down to the margin of its waters; on the east side the bold hills of Gadara rise steeply from the waters; while far away, beyond its northern point, the lofty Hermon lifts its majestic form towards heaven, with its summit wrapped in snow. When we first looked on its placid waters, as we came down the

VIEW OF THE CITY OF LIMA



mountain's side, they were as smooth as a sea of glass; but by the time we reached the shore a fresh wind had sprung up, and the white-capped waves were rolling up on the pebbly beach. After resting a while from the fatigue of the journey, and while waiting for our dinner, we took a stroll into the adjoining city.

TIBERIAS.—Tiberias is only mentioned once in the New Testament (John vi. 23). It was founded by Herod Antipas, the murderer of John the Baptist, a few years before our Saviour began his public ministry. Herod named it in honour of his friend and patron, Tiberius, the Roman emperor. It was a town of considerable importance in the days of our Saviour, and derived its subsistence chiefly from the fisheries upon the lake, on the west side of which it was situated. Jesus was often near this city, but we are not sure that he ever entered it. It was built on a spot that had formerly been occupied as a cemetery. For this reason the Jews were not willing to go into it, because, when they touched a dead body or the place where such a body was laid, they were taught by their religion to consider themselves as unclean.

Tiberias is a walled town of some two thousand inhabitants, but the walls are in a very dilapidated condition. They were rent and shattered by an earthquake in 1837, and have never been rebuilt. The inhabitants are chiefly Mohammedans, and it does not accord with their views either of philosophy or religion to repair such ruins. The earthquake which caused the ruin, in their estimation, was an expression of the will of Allah, and to repair those ruins would be to go contrary to that will; and so the ruins are left untouched. There is a little chapel here which bears the name of the apostle Peter, and in which are preserved many reputed relics of the apostle. Of all

the filthy places to be seen in this deserted land, I think Tiberias is, without exception, the most filthy. We attempted to walk through the streets of the town, but so intolerable were the filth and stench that met us at every step that we were obliged to give it up and beat a hasty retreat, fairly driven off by the heaps of accumulated offal that lay reeking in the sun.

A SAIL ON THE LAKE.—We left Tiberias after an early breakfast in the morning, to proceed to the upper end of the lake. There are two ways of accomplishing this journey; one is by proceeding on horseback round the shores of the lake, and the other by taking a boat and sailing up the lake, and having your horses go round to meet you there. We preferred decidedly to take the latter course. So we hired a fisherman's boat, with a couple of men to row us. It was probably some such a boat as the apostles used, and it was for this reason that I preferred to take the journey by water. I felt that there was a great charm in embarking on the "Sea of Galilee" in this primitive way. Our object in doing this was not only to enjoy the sail on those sacred waters, but at the same time to be in the best position for indulging the thoughts that are so naturally suggested in this hallowed locality, and the associations that do so cluster around it.

It was a very pleasant morning, and the sail was in itself delightful. Our boat was provided with a sail, but it was too calm to use it; and, indeed, what little wind there was came directly down the lake, so that we had to make our way right in the face of it. Our boatmen, therefore, like the apostles of old, were obliged to be "*toiling in rowing*" to enable us to accomplish our journey. It took between three and four hours of hard, continuous rowing to bring us to the upper end of the lake.

In form this body of water is a sort of elongated ellipse. Its dimensions are twelve or thirteen miles in length, and from six to nine in breadth at its widest parts. The basin which it *occupies* is remarkably depressed, being not less than six hundred feet below the level of the Mediterranean Sea. From the mountains which surround it the winds rush down suddenly and with great violence. A recent traveller says: "We pitched our tents on the shore, and remained for three days and nights exposed to the fury of one of those tremendous winds. We had to double-pin all the tent ropes, and frequently were obliged to hang with our whole weight upon them to keep the quivering tabernacle from being carried bodily into the air. No wonder the disciples toiled and rowed hard all night when such a wind was blowing. The whole lake before us was lashed into fury, and the waves repeatedly rolled up to our tent door, tumbling over the ropes with such violence as to carry away the tent-pins." It was some such wind as this that overtook the vessel on which our Saviour was embarked, and rolled the waves in upon it, "so that it was now full," while Jesus was asleep on the hinder part of the ship. Then followed the alarming cry, "Master, master, carest thou not that we perish?" and the quiet utterance of those wondrous words, "Peace, be still!" with the instant calm they brought upon that stormy scene.

THE RUINS OF CAPERNAUM.—These ruins, with the upper end of the lake, are well represented by our engraving. On reaching the upper end of the lake, we landed and wandered around among the ruins there with peculiarly solemn feelings. It is impossible to determine with any accuracy the site of the different cities of Capernaum, Chorazin, and Bethsaida. We know that they lay close

together at the upper part of the lake, and their ruins seem to blend in one common mass. These ruins lie scattered over the space of several miles. Among them are fine specimens of delicately-sculptured columns, which, as relics of artistic antiquity, would enrich any museum. No sight or sound of life appears, but the most utter desolation prevails. The fearful woes pronounced by Jesus on those over-favoured but guilty cities seem to have



RUINS OF CAPERNAUM.

rested on them and clung to them all alike. Their candlestick has been removed, and overwhelming ruin has come down upon them. They were "exalted to heaven, but they have been thrust down to hell."

The scenery around this lake is most deeply interesting and affecting. Nothing that I saw in Palestine moved me so much as my visit to the shores of the Sea of Galilee. And this is natural enough when we reflect how closely connected it is with the scenes of our Saviour's history.

Just think how many interesting events in the life of Jesus took place, either at Capernaum or in its vicinity, on the shores of this lake! It was here, on leaving Nazareth, that he came and dwelt (Matt. iv. 13); it was this which was called "*his own city*" (Matt. ix. 1). It was here he began to preach (Matt. iv. 17); and it was here that he afterwards taught and preached more frequently than elsewhere (Mark ix. 33-50). It was here that he healed the sick and cast out devils; and made the fish of the sea furnish him with tribute-money (Matt. xvii. 24-27); and taught in their synagogues and from house to house with a power and authority that filled all who heard him with astonishment.

Jesus said Capernaum was "exalted to heaven." It was the same with the other cities. This refers particularly to the fact that Jesus spent so much of his time there. It was a great privilege to be permitted to hear him preach, and to see the miracles that he performed. This seemed to bring heaven very near them—it raised them, as it were, to its very gate: it would have been very easy for them to step in. And this is the way in which the people of Capernaum were "*exalted to heaven.*"

But Jesus declared that a great change was to come over that city: he said it should "*be brought down to hell.*" This does not mean that all the inhabitants of that city should lose their souls and perish for ever; it only means that the city which had been so very much prospered should lose its prosperity and be brought to the lowest place among cities. Being "exalted to heaven" only meant the privileges and prosperity which the people of this city enjoyed; and so being "brought down to hell" only denoted the loss of their prosperity and blessings. Their privileges, wealth, and other blessings were to be taken from them, and they

were to sink as *low* among cities as they had formerly been exalted.

And these words of our Saviour were wonderfully fulfilled. In the wars between the Jews and the Romans these cities were utterly destroyed. And so they have remained ever since ; and now it is impossible to tell where Capernaum was, or either of the other cities that stood near it. There are broken columns and other ruins scattered all about the shores of the lake where it is supposed that these cities once stood. I remember when we visited this spot that we sat down on some of the broken ruins to think of what Jesus had said about Capernaum, and how wonderfully all that he said had come to pass. The lesson which this subject teaches us is *the importance of valuing and improving our privileges, and the certainty of losing them if we do not.*

As I sailed over the waters of this sea, or rambled on its desolate shores, I seemed to see the compassionate Saviour labouring, by his stupendous miracles and his majestic teaching, to do good to the eager multitudes that crowded around him. I thought, too, of that stormy night when the disciples were "toiling in rowing, for the wind was contrary. And in the fourth watch of the night" (or just before morning) "Jesus went unto them, walking on the water." I thought of the terror of the disciples when they cried out with fear, supposing it was a spirit ; and of the cheering voice of Jesus when he said, "*It is I ; be not afraid.*" I thought of impulsive Peter asking permission to go to his Master walking on the water. He walked a few steps, then, frightened by the stormy waves, was beginning to sink, when Jesus caught him by the hand, and said, "O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?" And after His death I imagined the disappointed disciples

returning to their old haunts and occupations. I remembered the apostolic party that went a-fishing. I thought of the Stranger they saw standing on the beach, and of his inquiry of them, "Children, have ye any meat?"—of his direction to them to cast the net on the right side of the ship—of the great multitude of fishes immediately caught; of John's exclamation, prompted by his quick-discerning love, "It is the Lord!" of impulsive Peter, girding on his coat and jumping overboard, that he might be the first to hail his Master; of the fire of coals on the shore, with the food prepared—of the invitation given and accepted to come and dine—of the wondering emotions of the astonished circle; and of the searching appeal to Peter, "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these?"—of the honest-hearted response, "Lord, thou knowest all things, thou *knowest* that I love thee"—and the solemn injunction, "Feed my lambs, feed my sheep." And with thoughts like these passing through the mind, it is easier to imagine than describe the feeling of deep and sacred awe with which the whole scene was contemplated.

We lunched on the shores of the lake, amidst the suggestive ruins of Capernaum, and then went on our way.

CHAPTER XIII.

FROM CAPERNAUM TO DAMASCUS—A DESOLATE COUNTRY—AIN MELAH—A RELISHABLE DRAUGHT—BANIAS—MOUNT HERMON—DAMASCUS.



FROM CAPERNAUM TO BANIAS.—This journey occupied us the greater part of two days. Our last chapter ended at lunch-time amidst the ruins of Capernaum, after our interesting sail up the lake, and our musings over the supposed sites of the cities among whose people Jesus spent so much of his time. Like most travellers, we found the Sea of Galilee full of special interest and attraction, and were exceedingly loath to turn our backs on a scene so full of sweet and sacred associations, and so truly classic to the thoughtful student of the Bible. But we had given to it all the time that our arrangements allowed; and so, lunch being ended, we mounted, and were again under way.

A DESOLATE COUNTRY.—On leaving the Sea of Galilee, our road lay across the mountains that surround the lake on the north. It is a rough and dreary-looking country. The road is a mere bridle-path, such as you find in making the ascent of Mount Washington; and most of the roads through this country are of the same character. I often used to think what Solomon and the kings that followed him did with their chariots. There would be very little opportunity for the use of such vehicles now.

We were occupied about two hours in making the ascent of these mountains. Then we rode for three hours more through the rich and fertile fields that formerly belonged to the tribe of Naphtali. As we rode on through the luxuriant portion of this favoured tribe, I thought how well "Moses, the man of God," might say, in his parting benediction—"O Naphtali, *satisfied with favour, and full with the blessing of the Lord*, possess thou the west and the south" (Deut. xxxiii. 23). The blessing lingers in Naphtali's portion still; and yet, in the whole day's ride, no village, no house, nor hut, nor cabin, nor barn, nor sign of human habitation, appeared. Some portions of the land are cultivated, and luxuriant fields of waving grain are seen: but this is the work of non-residents—no one lives on those smiling fields; neither life nor property would be safe there. Some wretched Arabs come from beyond Jordan and pitch their tents here for a few days. With their simple, primitive ploughs they *scratch* up a portion of the land and sow it. Then they disappear till harvest time. When the grain is ripe they come and reap it, if some one else does not save them the trouble; and then they go away again. A mournful and solitary silence reigns over the country. Nature has lavished on it some of its choicest gifts, but man has deserted it. Ruins are numerous enough: every mile or two is the old site of some town or village, now well-nigh hidden beneath a jungle of thorns and thistles. How wonderfully God's threatenings have been fulfilled in the experience of this land! Face never answered to face in a glass more strikingly than the present condition of this country answers to the recorded predictions of God's Word concerning it. Here is one of these predictions as a sample: "I will make your cities waste, and bring your sanctuaries unto desolation.....And I will bring the land into deso-

lation : and your enemies who dwell therein shall be astonished at it" (Lev. xxvi. 31, 32).

About six o'clock in the evening we came in sight of our tents, which had been pitched in advance for us. After a fatiguing journey of eleven hours, it was a pleasant sight to see the place where we were to tarry for the night. We were prepared to be in thorough sympathy with Issachar, when, as the dying patriarch said, "*he saw that rest was good*" (Gen. xlix. 15). "*Ain Melahah*" was the name of our stopping-place for that night. It is not a familiar name to Bible readers, nor does it occur in connection with any of the events of Scripture history. It is a fountain—one of the largest in the country—with the ruins of an old mill near it, in a wild part of the country, and forms the usual resting-place of travellers between Tiberias and Banias.

A RELISHABLE DRAUGHT.—Lemonade was our favourite drink while journeying through this country. After the fatigue of a long, hot ride, while resting in our tents and waiting for dinner, we were in the habit of calling on our Italian steward, Dominicho, and asking him to prepare for each of us a glass of this refreshing beverage. We did so this evening. In due time it was brought, and we enjoyed it as usual. While we were sipping it deliberately, one of our companions from the adjoining tent came in, and sat chatting with us till we had exhausted the contents of our glasses. While this was going on, an occasional twinkle of his eye seemed to indicate that he had something to say which might interest us. At length he said : "I thought it a pity to mar your enjoyment of the lemonade ; but now that you have finished it, there is a little item of information that I feel tempted to communicate. I happened to be over at the cook's tent when Dominicho came to execute

your order, and I will tell you how this delightful beverage was prepared. You know that little iron wash-basin in which the men perform their ablutions? Well, *he mixed the lemonade in that, and then strained it through his fingers!*" Where ignorance is bliss, how unfortunate to be wise!

The scenery around this camping-ground is very fine. Not far off is a lake, "the waters of Merom" of the Old Testament, near where Joshua fought and conquered Jabin, king of Hazor, as we read in Joshua xi. 6-10. Across the lake is the fine range of the hills of Bashan, and the beautiful snow-clad Hermon is in full view. The guide-book says: "The things that most prevail at Ain Melahah are malaria from the marsh around the lake, and *wild hogs*."

We passed a comfortable night, however, without a visit from the hogs, and, as the result proved, without the experience of any harm from the malaria. The season was too early to apprehend inconvenience from that source; but in August or September a night's encampment at Ain Melahah would doubtless involve much more risk.

BANIAS, OR CÆSAREA PHILIPPI.—We left Ain Melahah after an early breakfast the next morning, and arrived here about three o'clock in the afternoon. Our ride all day was through a very rich and fertile country, much better in this respect than any other portion of the land we had seen. Beautiful streams of water, fed by the melting snows of Hermon, are flowing everywhere in this part of the land. The pleasant sound of rushing waters was in our ears nearly all the day.

We stopped to lunch at noon by the side of a fountain called Tell-el-Kady. It issues from the foot of a hill, and sends forth a copious stream of water that constitutes one of the sources of the Jordan. And so, having seen this

sacred river at its terminus by the Dead Sea, we saw it here at one of its remotest sources. We drank freely of the fountain, for its water was the coolest and pleasantest we had found in the land.

Near by this fountain the ancient city of Dan was situated, where Jeroboam set up the calf for Israel to worship. It was one of the most northern cities of the land; and as Beersheba was in the extreme south, the phrase "from Dan to Beersheba" came into use as the familiar way of denoting the whole length of the land.

The Situation of Banias.—In the time of our Saviour it was a large and splendid town, but since then it has met with many changes. The grand buildings have all been destroyed, and the crowds of people who used to live here have all passed away. The present village of Banias is very small. There are only some forty or fifty wretched-looking houses in the place, with a very few inhabitants. But though the town itself has changed so much, the situation in which it lies is very beautiful and very interesting.

The village is situated on a plain in a valley at the foot of Mount Hermon. This great mountain rises up seven or eight thousand feet above the town, and the top of it is covered with snow. This gives it a very beautiful appearance. And then not far from the town is a great cave or grotto, out of which a large fountain of water gushes forth. The water which forms this fountain is supplied by the melting snow on the top of Mount Hermon. It rushes out in sufficient quantity to make a good-sized stream. This stream flows away, and forms one of the chief sources of the river Jordan; and as the water from this fountain flows through the plain and valley near Banias, it makes the land fertile. You see fields of waving grain, with

vines and fig trees and olive trees, growing everywhere, and making the country all around look very beautiful.

And then there is much that is interesting in *the history of Banias*. It is not mentioned in the Old Testament. Some people, indeed, think that it is the same place that is spoken of several times in the Book of Joshua as Baal-



SOURCE OF THE JORDAN AT BANIAS.

Gad; but there is no certainty about this. We know, however, that it was first called Panium, or Paneas; and it received this name from the word Pan, one of the idol gods that was worshipped among the heathen. He was represented, as half man and half goat, and was especially worshipped by shepherds. In the cave or grotto of which we have spoken, near Banias, there used to be an altar that

was employed in the worship of this god Pan. This gave the name of Paneas to the town that was near to it.

In the New Testament this place is called Cæsarea Philippi. It was in the part of the country that was ruled over by Philip, tetrarch of Trachonitis, who is spoken of in Luke iii. 1. He enlarged the city, and built beautiful temples and palaces in it, and did much to increase its wealth and prosperity. It was he who changed the name of the place. He called it Cæsarea, in honour of Tiberius Cæsar, the Emperor of Rome. He added his own name to this, calling it Cæsarea Philippi, to distinguish it from another town on the sea-coast that was also called Cæsarea. Herod the Great built a splendid temple here in honour of the Roman emperor. He also established games here, such as the people were very fond of in those days. In these they had wrestling-matches and racing-matches, and other trials of strength and skill, which drew great crowds of people to the places where these games were practised.

After the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, Titus, the Roman general, brought great numbers of the Jews whom he had made captives to this place, and made them fight with lions and tigers and other wild animals in the circus, for the amusement of the people. Very many of the poor Jews were killed in this way. How strange and how sad it is that human beings should be so hard-hearted as to find pleasure in seeing their fellow-creatures cruelly torn to pieces by wild beasts!

Since those days this place has passed through many changes. The effect of these changes has been to scatter its inhabitants and waste its strength, and leave it a wretched little place that hardly deserves to be called a town. In the midst of these changes, Cæsarea Philippi, the

name by which it is known in Scripture, was lost, and the old name Paneas has been changed into Banias, by which it is now known.

On the side of the mountain which rises up behind Banias, and about a thousand feet above it, are the ruins of a strong old castle. This is supposed to have been built before the time of our Saviour. It has been often taken and retaken in the different wars of the country. Though it is no longer used, yet many travellers climb up to look at the old ruins, and to think about the strange things that have taken place there. After being eight hours in the saddle, only one of our party had energy enough to make the ascent. It took him three hours to go up and down, and we were more than reconciled to the wisdom of our decision by his frank acknowledgment that "*it didn't pay.*"

But, after all, it is *the connection of Banias with Jesus* that gives us the greatest interest in it. This was the furthest point towards the north to which Jesus went in his journeys up and down the Holy Land. In Matthew xvi. 13 we read: "When Jesus came into the coasts of Cæsarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?" The same thing is mentioned by Mark, in the 8th chapter and 27th verse. Here it was that Peter made his celebrated confession of Christ, declaring that he was the Son of God.

It was here, too, that Jesus taught his disciples the great lesson about the worth of the soul, when he asked the important question, "What shall it profit a man, if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"

And it is supposed by some that the transfiguration of our Saviour took place in this neighbourhood, instead of on

the top of Mount Tabor. They think it was from Banias, or Cæsarea Philippi, that Jesus took the three disciples—Peter, and James, and John—who were to be the witnesses of his glorious change, and that “*the high mountain, apart by themselves,*” to which he led them, was one of the high points on the side of Mount Hermon, not far from this city of Cæsarea Philippi. But though there is some uncertainty about the *place* where the transfiguration of Jesus occurred, it is very pleasant to know that if we really love and serve him there is no uncertainty about the fact that we shall share in the glory of that wonderful change at last; for it is written, “He shall change our vile bodies, and *make them like unto his own glorious body.*” And it is written again, that “when he shall appear, *we shall be like him*; for we shall see him as he is.”

FROM BANIAS ROUND MOUNT HERMON TO DAMASCUS.—We spent two days in making this journey. Taking an early start from Banias, we had a nine hours’ ride through a wild mountain region before we reached our camping-ground at the little village of Kefr Hauwar. This village lies among the mountains of Hermon. Kefr means a river, and near the village by which our tents were pitched is a small stream forming one of the branches of the Pharpar of Damascus, and to which the name Kefr Hauwar is applied.

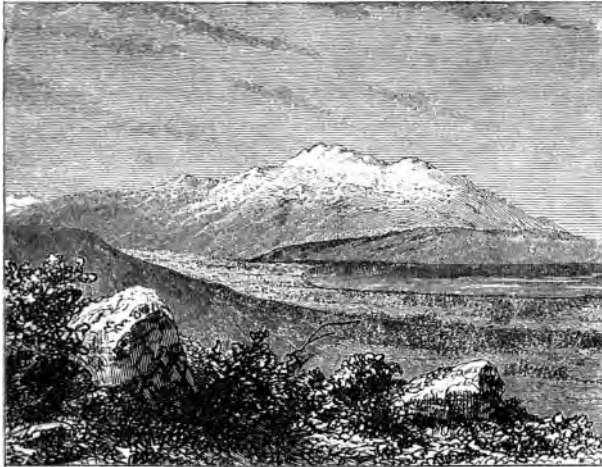
MOUNT HERMON.—The most interesting feature of this day’s journey was the charming and ever-changing views with which we were favoured of Hermon in all its beauty and grandeur. Our road lay across the successive ridges of this range. The mountains amidst which we were pursuing our winding way had their summits wrapped in snow. We had patches of snow from time to time lying across our path; and when we paused to lunch, we had a

plate of piled-up snow on our table, as well for the novelty of the thing as for its cooling influence on the weak, warm wine of the country which we carried with us. But this was not all we had to remind us that we were among the mountains. In the course of the morning we had quite a severe hail-storm, accompanied and followed by a wind so cold and piercing that, with overcoats on and all available extra appliances, it was hard to keep tolerably comfortable even in the clear sunshine. But it was early spring, and we were skirting the base of majestic Hermon, and so all these circumstances were only in keeping with the time and place of our sojourning.

In speaking about this mountain, the first thing to notice is *its name*. Mountains very often take their names from something that is striking in their appearance. Thus, Mount Lebanon has a name which means *white*, because it is chiefly composed of light-coloured limestone, which gives it a *whitish* look. Mont Blanc, in Switzerland, is so called because *blanc* is the French word for white; and this mountain, the highest in Europe, being always covered with snow, is never seen except as a *white* mountain. Hermon means "a sharp, lofty peak;" and it receives this name from the appearance of one of its peaks. In old times it used to be called *Sirion* and *Shenir* (Deut. iii. 9), and both these words mean a *breast-plate*. These names were given to it because its rounded, glittering top, as the sun shone upon it, seemed to suggest the idea of a breast-plate. It was also called *Sion* in old times, as we find from Deuteronomy iv. 48. This means *high*, and was a very proper name to give to one of the highest mountains in the Holy Land. The Arabs call it *Jebel esh-Sheikh*, which means "*The Chief Mountain*;" and *Jebel eth-Thelj*, which means "*The Snowy Mountain*," because even in the midst of summer

the snow never entirely disappears from the top of Hermon. And so we see that all the different names of this mountain refer to something in its appearance as we look upon it.

The next thing to notice about Hermon is *its position*. When we see the letter B anywhere, we know in a moment that its place in the alphabet is next to A, and so we understand just where it belongs. When we read about Hermon in our Bibles, perhaps we do not know exactly



MOUNT HERMON.

where it is. Let us try to remember that it is in the northern part of the land, and on the eastern side of the river Jordan. It is not always put down distinctly in our maps of the Holy Land. And yet it is very easy to tell just where Mount Hermon lies. Suppose you take a map of Palestine and find the city of Sidon, on the shore of the Mediterranean Sea, and then draw a line east from that point till you come to the city of Damascus; then put your

pencil about the middle of this line, and draw it down south about one-sixth the length of the line from Sidon to Damascus, and that will bring you to just where Mount Hermon lies. If you will only go through this operation once, you will fix the position of Hermon in your mind so clearly, that as long as you live, when you hear or read about Hermon, you will know where it belongs as well as you know the place to which B belongs in the alphabet.

Other noticeable features about Mount Hermon are its *height and size*. Next to Mount Lebanon, it is the highest mountain in Syria. It has never been very carefully measured, though several well-known travellers have tried to estimate its height. And they have not differed very much in the opinions they have formed about it. They all agree in supposing that Hermon is between nine and ten thousand feet above the level of the sea. The highest point of Mount Lebanon is about seven hundred feet higher than this. That is so small a difference as hardly to be noticed by the eye, and Mount Hermon really appears, therefore, as if it were the highest point in the whole land. If you attempted to go round the base of this great mountain, you would have to travel over a circle of about thirty miles in extent. When we think of the great space which Hermon covers on the surface of the ground, and of the great height to which it rises in the air, it may help us to learn how great the power of God is, who—as Dr. Watts says in the hymn—

“Spread the flowing seas abroad,
And bade the mountains rise.”

This mountain was the landmark of the Israelites. It was associated with their ideas of the northern border

almost as intimately as the Mediterranean Sea was with the west. Indeed, there is one passage in which it seems to be used as a synonyme for "north." I refer to Psalm lxxxix. 12, in which David says, "The *north* and the south, thou hast created them: Tabor and *Hermon* shall rejoice in thy name." And it was very natural that this should be so; for from whatever part of Palestine the Israelite turned his eye northward, Hermon was there shutting in the view. From the plains of the coast, from the mountains of Samaria, from the Jordan valley, from the heights of Moab and Gilead, and from the broad fields of Bashan, that pale blue, snow-capped cone forms the most striking feature on the northern horizon.

Hermon was especially remarkable for its dew. Thus the royal Psalmist says, "As *the dew* of Hermon, the dew that descended on the mountains of Zion" (Ps. cxxxiii. 3). We read in Deuteronomy iv. 48, "Even unto Mount Sion, which is Hermon." Thus it appears that "Sion" was one of the ancient names of Hermon, and that the Psalmist uses this old name in the passage just quoted. That copious dews should be found in connection with such a mountain is not surprising; for the snow on its summit condenses the vapours that float during summer in the higher regions of the atmosphere, causing light clouds to hover round it and abundant dew to descend on it, while the whole country elsewhere is parched and the atmosphere cloudless and dry.

Another interesting feature about Mount Hermon is *its ruins*. On the top of one of the highest points of this mountain are found some very remarkable ruins. The foundation of a small stone temple has been traced out, with broken columns and other ruins. No one can tell when these buildings were erected, or who was the builder of them, or for what purpose they were built. It seems

very strange to think of putting up expensive buildings in a place so high, so difficult to get at in any season of the year, and which in winter must always have been covered with snow. It is supposed, however, that these buildings were erected for the purpose of being used in connection with the idolatrous worship which prevailed in this country before the Israelites took possession of it. The worshippers of idols loved to choose out hill-tops and mountain-summits as the places where they would build their altars and offer prayers to their idols. And when the Israelites came into Canaan, God commanded them to "cut down the groves, and take away the high places"—or the temples built, and the altars set up there—which were used in the worship of idols. And so it is pleasant to look at these old ruins, or to think about them, because, as they lie prostrate on the ground, they seem to tell us how the idols for whose honour they were once used have passed away, and how the one true God is now worshipped in place of them.

The only other feature of interest about Mount Hermon that we would now speak of is *its beauty*. If we could stand on the top of Hermon, we should see how beautiful it is in the wide prospect that is spread out to view there. The whole country can be seen at a glance. From the Mediterranean Sea on the west to the mountains of Moab and the Dead Sea on the east, and from Lebanon in the north to the hill country of Judea in the south, every part of the land is fully in view from the top of Hermon. There is great beauty in this.

And then if we should begin to travel down the sides of this mountain, we should find beauty of another kind connected with Hermon. The snow upon its summit is *always* melting, and rills and streams are thus formed

which go dashing down the sides of the mountain. These make the lower slopes of the mountain beautiful in their fertility. The river Jordan has its source in the melting snows of Hermon; and so has the Orontes and the other principal rivers of Palestine.

And then if we should leave the base of Hermon and travel off to distant parts of the land, whenever we turned and looked back we should see Hermon lifting itself up towards the skies, and always beautiful in the snowy robe that covers it. When Moses stood upon the top of Nebo, to look at the promised land before he died, he saw Mount Hermon far off in the distance. And it seemed so beautiful to him that he spoke of it as "that *goodly mountain* and Lebanon."

A RAINY NIGHT.—Journeying on in full view of Hermon all day, we halted after a nine hours' ride at Kefr Hauwar, the point already mentioned. Here it rained hard all night. The rain was accompanied by a furious wind, which kept us awake part of the night, fearing every moment that our tent would be overthrown. But, happily for us, that catastrophe did not befall us there. I was waked in the morning by the rain dropping on my head and on several parts of the bed. I rose earlier than I should have done, on this account. On opening the door of our tent, I saw a glorious sunrise among the mountains. But very soon after the sun went under a mass of dark, heavy clouds—an ominous sign for the day. There was a glorious rainbow, too, over the Hermon range at breakfast-time—another unpropitious omen. I thought of the old saying, "A rainbow in the morning is the shepherd's warning," and hoped that for once at least the sign might fail; but such was not to be the case.

STARTING FOR DAMASCUS.—We struck our tents and

started for Damascus in a heavy rain, by no means a comfortable accompaniment of such an operation. All through the morning we had furious squalls of wind and rain, alternating with sudden bursts of glorious sunshine. By noon, however, the sun got the upper hand, and for the rest of the day it was bright and clear, though attended with a wind of fearful violence. Fortunately for us it was on our backs, for to have faced its fury would have been almost impossible.

The first part of our route was still among the mountains, with a continuation of the most charming scenery. After this we rode for several hours over a level, dreary, desolate plain. It was interesting to think that "Saul of Tarsus," on his memorable journey from Jerusalem to Damascus, had doubtless travelled over this same route, and gazed admiringly on the same grand scenery. About noon we passed the traditional scene of his wonderful vision, "as he drew near to Damascus." How full of stirring thoughts is such a locality! The spot pointed out in this connection is reached just before leaving the desert district above spoken of for the paradise of fertility that immediately surrounds Damascus, where the Abana and Pharpar subserve the purpose of irrigation, in making an Eden of what would otherwise be a desert of sterility.

There are three things that make this an interesting place for a lover of the Bible to visit. The first of these is *the beauty of Damascus*. Nothing can exceed the beauty of the scene when Damascus first bursts upon the view of the traveller approaching it from the mountains. In looking at it, you are reminded of the description of the Church, as—

"A little spot enclosed by grace,
Out of the world's wide wilderness."

It is an oasis in a desert—a jewel of beauty enclosed in a broad ring of desolation. In looking at it, you can easily credit the story told of Mohammed, that on first beholding it, he turned away and refused to enter it, saying, that “as there was but one paradise, he was resolved not to have his in this world.”

I was forcibly reminded, too, of the remark I had heard many years ago from Mr. Buckingham, the English traveller, while lecturing on Syria. Speaking of the tranquilizing effect produced upon his mind by the scene when Damascus first burst upon his view in all the surpassing loveliness of its quiet beauty, he said that, in all his after life, when chafed and troubled with its disturbing cares, he was accustomed to close his eyes, and abstracting his mind from the things that surrounded him, to recall the image of that scene, as pictured on memory’s tablet, to calm the perturbation of his spirit and recover his usual serenity.

It often happens that objects appear beautiful when seen from afar, but are altogether different when looked at close at hand. “Distance lends enchantment to the view,” which is all dispelled when we come close to them. This is strikingly the case with the city of Jerusalem. When the traveller reaches the point of the road which gives him the first view of the holy city, with “the mountains standing round about” it, he cannot refrain from taking up the Psalmist’s language, and exclaiming, “Beautiful for situation is Jerusalem.” But when he comes near, and sees the squalid wretchedness and abounding filth that prevail through its narrow, crooked, poverty-stricken streets, a painful sense of revulsion is experienced, from which it takes some time to recover. But it is different with Damascus. There is no jar experienced on drawing nigh

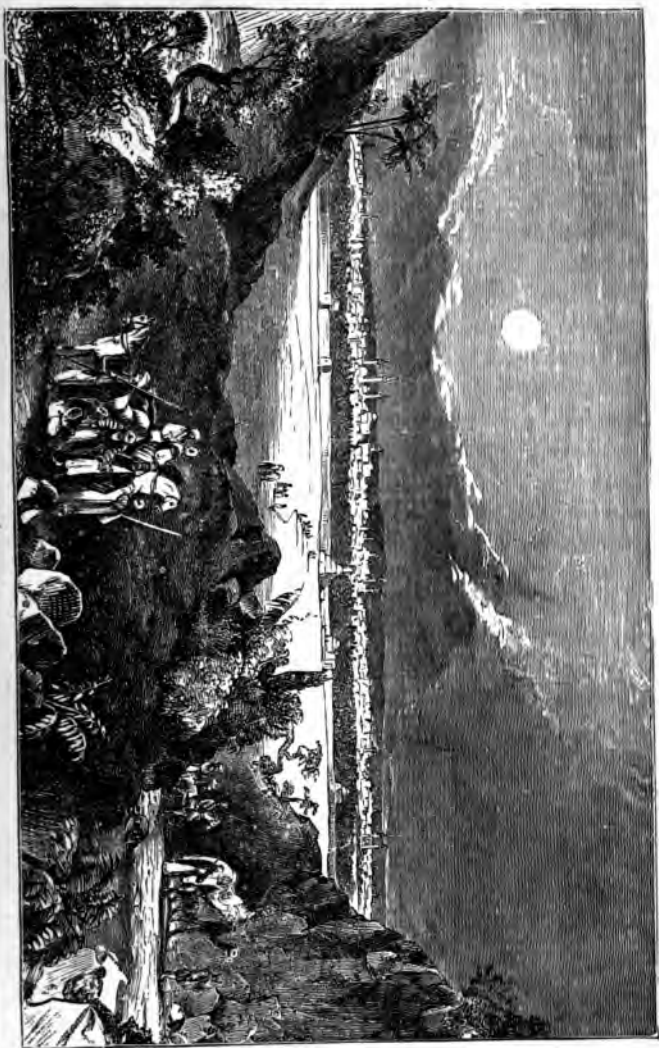
to it, and no disappointment felt, requiring patient and earnest effort to overcome it.

If there are few other cities in the world as old as this, certainly there are very few as beautiful. Several things help to make up the beauty of this famous city. One of these is its *situation*. It lies in the midst of a great plain, about thirty miles in extent. This is surrounded by high mountains. On one side Hermon is seen, and on the other side Lebanon, with their summits wrapped in snow. And the contrast between the lofty, rugged mountain and the low, level plain is very striking.

Another thing that adds to the beauty of Damascus is its *abundant supply of water*. This is a great blessing to a city anywhere, but it is especially so in a hot country like Syria. Without this, there would not only be no beauty there, but no life.

We read in the Old Testament about "the Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus." These were great blessings to it then, and they are so still. They are not great rivers, like the Delaware, or the Hudson, or the Mississippi. They are small streams, that are fed by the melting snows on the mountains of Lebanon. But the water of these streams is clear and sparkling, and the people of Damascus make a very good use of it. These two streams are taken into the city, and made to supply a great number of public and private fountains. These meet you at almost every turn, making sweet music with their falling waters, and sending forth their streams everywhere, carrying coolness, cleanliness, and comfort with them.

But the chief thing that helps to make Damascus so beautiful is *the gardens*. There are gardens scattered through the city and all round about it. Through these gardens the waters of the rivers spoken of are led by means



DAMASCUS.

of small canals. This makes the soil rich and fertile, so that everything grows in the most abundant manner. Vines and olive trees, figs and pomegranates, plums and apricots, and citrons, and all the fruit-trees of the East, grow and flourish here most luxuriantly. When you first come in sight of the city, as you begin to descend the side of the mountains that surround it, it looks like a perfect paradise. You see the buildings of the city, with their domes and minarets sparkling in the sunlight; and the gardens that surround the city smiling in their loveliness, and making a wonderful contrast with the barrenness of the desert, which prevails wherever the water from the rivers does not reach.

The *antiquity of Damascus* is another thing that makes it interesting. For a city that is still flourishing, Damascus is one of the oldest cities in the world. The name of its founder is not known, and its early history runs back beyond the time of which we have any authentic records. Josephus says that Uz, the son of Aram, was the founder of the city; but he gives no authority for the statement. It may be so, however, as it is known that the family of Aram colonized north-eastern Syria, and gave it the name of Aram, by which it is universally known in Scripture. The natural highway from southern Mesopotamia—the cradle of the human race—is across the desert to Syria. The earliest wanderers westward, after the dispersion of Babel, would thus be brought to the banks of the Abana. Such a site would be at once occupied; and once taken possession of, would never be given up.

What we certainly know is, that Damascus was already a noted place as far back as the days of Abraham. Thus we read that “the steward of his house was Eliezer of *Damascus*.” This was nearly two thousand years before

Christ. And when we bear in mind that Damascus has been a populous and flourishing city for the wondrously long period of *forty centuries*, it is certainly well entitled to our respect on the score of its antiquity.

And then the other thing that adds to this interest is *the history of Damascus*. Our space will not allow us to go into details on this point. But in this uncertain world many changes must go to make up the long period over which the existence of this fine old city has spread itself. It figures largely in the Old Testament records. The interesting incident of Naaman's cure brings Damascus to our notice.

The prophet Elisha made a visit to Damascus on one occasion. Ben-hadad, the king, his old enemy (2 Kings vi. 11-14), heard of his arrival, and sent one of his chief servants with a costly present and a special inquiry. "Thy son Ben-hadad, king of Syria," said the messenger, "hath sent me to thee, saying, Shall I recover of this disease?" The messenger was Hazael, whom Elisha had previously been commissioned to anoint king over Syria. The prophet read through at a glance the wicked designs of the crafty favourite of the king, and his searching glance brought a blush to the traitor's face. All the circumstances of this sad history are thoroughly Oriental: the "forty camels' burden" of "every good thing of Damascus;" the accomplished duplicity and cruelty of the confidential servant; the ease with which the murderer ascended the throne of his victim, and the subsequent barbarity of the usurper.

Damascus rose to great prosperity under Hazael. Then it passed in succession under Assyrian and Roman sway. Christianity advanced rapidly in this ancient city. Its metropolitan was present at the Council of Nice, with seven

bishops. About seventy years afterwards, the great temple was converted into a Christian church, and dedicated to St. John the Baptist. For nearly three centuries it remained under Christian influences. Then came another faith and another race. In the seventh century it fell into the hands of the Moslems, and under their control, with various changes, it has remained. Since then the Cross has never displaced the Crescent. "Perhaps the most remarkable fact connected with the history of this city," says one, "is that it has flourished under every change of dynasty and under every form of government. It may be called the *perennial* city. Its position among the capitals of the world has been wonderfully uniform. The presence of royalty never seems to have greatly advanced its internal welfare, nor did its removal cause decay. It has never rivalled, in its population or in the splendour of its structures, Nineveh, Babylon, or Thebes; but neither has it resembled them in the greatness of its fall. It has existed and prospered alike under Persian despotism, Grecian anarchy, and Roman patronage; and it exists and prospers still, in spite of Turkish oppression and misrule."

There is a good hotel in Damascus, but we pitched our tents in a beautiful garden just outside the walls of the city, and made that our headquarters during the time of our sojourn here.

And now let me give a sketch of our

WALKS ABOUT DAMASCUS.—After resting a while in our beautiful garden encampment without the walls, we took a stroll into the city. Our first walk was along "the street which is called Straight," where Ananias was sent to the house of Judas, to be the messenger of peace and salvation to the converted persecutor, "Saul of Tarsus." It is now

a bazaar of shops. It is no longer remarkable for its *straightness*; but no thoughtful Christian can walk through it without having stirring thoughts suggested about that wonderful event which forms one of the most memorable incidents connected with the history of this most ancient and interesting city.

The Cleanliness of Damascus.—It struck us as being the cleanliest and most attractive of all the Oriental cities we had seen. You meet with a fountain in the streets at every few steps, and are seldom out of the sound of falling or running water. And when you see the use that is made of the two celebrated rivers connected with this city, the comfort and cleanliness which they afford, and the wondrous fertility and beauty to which they give rise within and around the city, you cannot but sympathize with the offended Naaman, the famous Syrian leper, in the natural question addressed by him to the prophet Elisha, as he indignantly asked: "Are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? may I not wash in them, and be clean?" How singular it is to find that there is a quarter for lepers now in the very place where the house of Naaman, the proud "captain of the hosts of Syria," is said to have stood!

The House of Ananias.—In our next walk about Damascus we visited what is supposed to be the traditional abode of the man who baptized the great "apostle of the Gentiles," and received him into membership with the Church of Christ. It is in the Christian quarter of the city. A cave fitted up as a chapel, underneath a modern-built house, is pointed out as the spot. The location is probably the true one, as the city has never been destroyed, like Jerusalem, and there has always been more or less of a Christian population, who would feel a natural interest

in preserving the identity of a spot so worthy of being remembered.

The Scene of Paul's Escape.—After leaving “the house of Ananias,” we took a walk outside the city, to see the reputed place where Paul was let down from the wall in a basket, to escape from the enmity of the Jews. The wall has all the appearance of great antiquity. The lower part, at least, is no doubt the same that stood there eighteen centuries ago, when Paul was having his first experience of persecution for the cross of Christ. The upper part has a more modern appearance, and there is a house of recent date built upon the wall, showing how easily one could be let down from the window without being observed by those within the city, as was the case in this instance, and also with Rahab when she let down the spies from the walls of Jericho.

The Bazaars.—A large portion of each of our days of sojourn at Damascus, except the Sabbath, was spent in visiting the bazaars. These constitute one of the most striking and interesting features of the city to a stranger. The appearance they present is so totally unlike anything we are accustomed to in our part of the world, that whole days spent in examining them would not be tiresome. Most of the shops here are scarcely equal in size to one of our ordinary bath-rooms, while many of them are not larger than a good-sized packing-box. Yet the wares of all the East are stored here, and the wealth contained in them is enormous. Here the Turkish merchant sits cross-legged in the midst of his little shop, often able to reach all his goods without rising. He generally has a portion of the Koran by his side, which he occupies himself in reading when not otherwise engaged—a practice that may well put to shame the followers of a purer faith.

The streets in this portion of the city are very narrow, and are covered over to protect them from the sun and rain. Each different trade has a street, or portion of a street, allotted to it: the shoe bazaars are in one street; the dry-goods in another; the blacksmiths and coppersmiths in another; the silversmiths in another; and so on. And thus the different races or religions have their own bazaars: in one street you see all Jews; in another, all Mohammedans; and in a third, all Christians.

Sunday in Damascus.—We spent a Sabbath here. It rained hard nearly all the previous night, and on waking in the morning I found a stream of water making its way under my bed into the middle of our tent. A pool of water had also formed inside of our tent-door. But it ceased raining before breakfast-time, and the rest of the day was very pleasant. The rain had melted the snow upon the mountains, and the river Pharpar, which flowed about a stone's throw from our tent, was so much swollen through the day that we feared an overflow. Happily for us, however, it did not take place.

We attended service at the chapel of the American Mission in the morning, and heard an excellent sermon from one of the missionaries. The Protestant Mission was established in Damascus in 1843, by two missionaries, one from the Presbyterian Church of Ireland and the other from the Church of Scotland. The latter soon withdrew from the field, and the work was then taken up and carried on by the Presbyterian Church in America. These missionaries have been very successful, especially in their educational work. The mission suffered greatly from the massacre in 1860; but it has since rallied, and is now very much encouraged.

The Great Mosque.—In one of our walks through the

city, we visited this interesting temple. It is more remarkable for its great size and antiquity than for its special claims to architectural beauty. It has existed through all the changes that have passed over the city; having been used in turn as a heathen temple, then as a Christian church, and now for centuries as a Turkish mosque. In the days of Israel's glory, it was devoted to the worship of the idol Rimmon, the favourite god of the Syrians. It was doubtless here that Naaman was wont to "bow down in the house of Rimmon," when he accompanied his master there, and for which he craved the indulgence of the prophet. Over the arch of one of the principal entrances to the mosque (curious enough, as showing what was its former character) is a cross, with a Greek inscription, containing these words: "*Thy kingdom, O Christ, is an everlasting kingdom; and thy dominion endureth throughout all generations.*" How strange that such a truth should have been thus silently but constantly proclaimed for more than twelve hundred years, at the threshold of one of the most sacred shrines of the followers of the false prophet!

A Near View of Damascus.—We finished our visit to the Great Mosque by ascending the minaret—two hundred and fifty feet high—to enjoy the view which it affords of the city as seen from such a point. And charming indeed was the prospect thus afforded. There lay the great city, with its gorgeous buildings, its countless domes and minarets, spread out at our feet. These, with the luxuriant gardens that surround them, the grand desert mountain range beyond, and, crowning all, in the far-off distance, the snow-capped summit of Hermon, blending with the clouds that rest upon them, make up a panorama which has but few to equal it on earth.

CHAPTER XIV.

FROM DAMASCUS TO BAALBEK—LAST VIEW OF DAMASCUS—AIN FIJEH—
THE GORGE OF THE BARADA—A NIGHT SCENE IN THE MOUNTAINS—
AN ORIENTAL ENTERTAINMENT—A SNOW-STORM ON THE MOUNTAINS—
BAALBEK—ITS SITUATION—ITS AGE—ITS RUINS—A SABBATH IN THE
TEMPLE OF JUPITER.



DEPARTURE FROM DAMASCUS.—We left Damascus on the 5th of April, a beautiful spring morning, on our way to Baalbek. Our route at first lay directly up the side of the mountains to the north of the city. We paused for a while on reaching the summit of the mountain, to get the last look at Damascus.

Nothing can exceed the richness and beauty of the scene there spread out before the eye of the beholder. The great plain beneath is like a vast ocean of luxuriant verdure, surrounding the beautiful city on every side. The plain of Damascus is of a triangular shape. The north-western side is formed by the long line of the Anti-Lebanon, the southern by the river Pharpar, and the eastern by a long line drawn through the lakes, which are connected with the extensive system of irrigation that prevails here. All the fertility and beauty of this marvellous plain is due to this artificial but extensive method of irrigation. But for this, what the eye now rests on with such delight, as an earthly paradise, would be a waste howling wilderness. About a hundred villages dot this plain, with a population of upwards of 40,000. The river Barada, the Abana of

Scripture, flows through it from west to east. The greater part of its water is led off by canals for irrigation, spreading life, and verdure, and beauty on every hand. The scene was one on which the eye loves to linger, and the impression of which is preserved on memory's tablet as a life-long treasure. But the last look was taken, and we turned reluctantly away from Damascus.

We then continued our journey across the range of the Anti-Lebanon, with Hermon's majestic, snow-capped summit in full view. Grandeur and desolation are the most striking features of this range of mountains. After crossing them, we entered a magnificent gorge, with one of the principal branches of the Barada flowing through the bottom of it. Our path now went winding about through a succession of the grandest scenes imaginable.

AIN FIJEH.—About the middle of the afternoon we reached a noted place in this gorge known as Ain Fijeh, or the Fountain of Fijeh. It is near a village of the same name, in one of the wildest parts of the gorge of the Barada. The fountain is one of the most striking in Syria; indeed, there are few to equal it in any land. The ruins of a very ancient temple stand at the foot of a steep cliff. The fountain issues from a cave under the ruins of a temple. It rushes out in vast volumes, with a great roar, a young river at the start, thirty feet in width, and three or four in depth, clear, sparkling, and beautiful. It forms one of the chief branches of the Abana, to which Damascus is indebted for so much of its fertility and beauty. The valley here is about two hundred yards wide, the bottom along the banks of the stream filled with orchards and poplar groves; above these are a few vineyards, carried up the shelving mountain-side as far as a man can gain a footing. To these succeed jagged cliffs, which rise to the

height of a thousand feet, or more, above the bed of the river.

After leaving this beautiful fountain, we continued our ride for two hours more through scenery of the wildest and most interesting character. The road winds round the side of stupendous mountains, overhanging steep precipices, with richly-cultivated gardens and fields at the bottom of the gorge. It is a sort of Corniche bridle-path, developing new scenes of interest at every turn.

Our camping-ground, at the close of this day's journey, was a very picturesque one. It was on a small plateau on the slope of a high mountain that overhangs the valley, or glen, where the river Barada has one of its many sources. The valley is shut in all round by a range of lofty mountains.

THE GORGE OF THE BARADA.—This gorge follows the winding of the river Barada, as it makes its way through the mountains of the Anti-Lebanon range. It is remarkable for the unusual blending which it presents of the elements of the grand and the beautiful. I never enjoyed a ride more in my life. The first part of it was through a continuation of the same grand gorge of the Barada which we had entered on the previous day. It seemed to grow wilder and more interesting as we advanced. Venerable ruins of ancient buildings were passed at several points. The rocks on the precipitous sides of the mountains have been perforated with tombs, many of which have been furnished with doors and façades, like dwellings, and looked very much as I have supposed the rock-hewn dwellings of Petra must appear. I can give no better idea of this magnificent gorge than to say that it is wilder and grander far than the wildest parts of the famous Notches in the White Mountains of America; but instead of being

traversed in half an hour or so, as is the case with them, it took us the best part of two days of continuous travelling to get through it.

A MEMORABLE NIGHT SCENE.—On the evening of April 6th we pitched our tents for the night at the little village of Surghaya, far up among the mountains. In the notes of our journal penned that evening, I find the following reference to the incidents which occurred during the previous night.

About the hour of midnight, the inmates of our tent—two of my companions and myself—were suddenly awakened by the heavy fall of something across our bed. On rousing ourselves, it became apparent in a moment that a furious blast of wind, sweeping through the gorge, had prostrated our tent, and brought it down upon us. It was impossible for us to extricate ourselves from the dilemma into which we were so suddenly thrown. Our dragoman, Ali Solomon, and his attendants were wrapped in the profoundest slumber in another part of the camp. The first thing to be done was to arouse them to a knowledge of our condition. But how was this to be accomplished? It was hardly possible for us to leave our beds, even if we had felt disposed to do so. The only available plan was to try and make noise enough to awake them. This we proceeded at once to do by a vigorous and united series of loud shoutings. Wild “Halloos!” and vociferous cries of “O Ali! Ali!” might there be heard ringing out upon the midnight air. Happily for us, the effort was successful. Pretty soon Ali and his forces came to the rescue. These men never think of undressing at night; and, of course, on awakening, they were ready for immediate action. Taking in “the situation” at once, they proceeded to afford relief. They first removed the prostrate tent which enveloped us,

and spread it out on the adjoining ground to arrange it for resetting. This occupied them the best part of an hour—at least it seemed that long to us. They worked to disadvantage, of course, as they were of necessity working in the dark. In the meantime we were left, literally and truly, "out in the cold." I never in my life had so vivid an impression of the real meaning of this oft-quoted phrase. There we lay, each on his little iron bedstead, with the piercing blasts from the neighbouring snow-capped mountains sweeping over us, and nothing but the glittering canopy of the sky above us.

THE BEAUTY OF THE SYRIAN SKY AT NIGHT.—It was indeed a splendid sight which the heavens afforded at that midnight hour, if we could only have been favoured with more comfortable surroundings for the contemplation of it. The firmament was like a vast arch of ebony crystal. The stars shone out with a sparkling brilliance such as we never witness in our own country. It was the first lesson in astronomy *I ever studied in bed*. The Great Bear was directly over my head, taking his stately march around the Polar Star, in solemn silence as usual, and seeming as calm and unconcerned as though everything was going on smoothly, and there were no poor shivering travellers in so sorry a plight, on whom his seven bright stars were shining. But it was quite too cold to give attention to anything so far away and so abstract as those stars were. Accordingly we gave up the study of astronomy for the time being, and covering our heads all over with the bed-clothes, our chief *study* then was to keep as warm as possible till the friendly shelter of the tent was again thrown around us. This was done at last, though very imperfectly; for when the daylight dawned, we found great openings had been left in the tent on all sides,

through which the wind found access in a way far more conducive to ventilation than to comfort. This was especially apparent when we came to dress, an operation that was performed by us all that morning in double quick time.

AN ORIENTAL LUNCH.—On passing out from the gorge of the Barada, we crossed a long fertile plain lying between the mountains. At the upper end of the plain is a little village, where we stopped to lunch, at the house of the sheik of the village, who was a friend of Ali, our dragoon. He received us cordially, and entertained us with true Oriental hospitality. A rug was spread on the floor in the middle of the room, around which we sat on mats, in Turkish style, to help ourselves. There were piles of bread and cakes, made just in the way in which the cakes of bread of which we read in the Bible were made. Water and meal are mixed together to the proper consistency, then rolled out, and baked by being spread over the inner side of oval iron pans, that have been previously heated for the purpose. Then there were plates of sour cheese, something like our cottage cheese, pickled olives, &c. We tried in vain to force down some of these proffered dainties; but it was hard work to make even a show of eating, and we should have fared badly if we had not had our own provisions to fall back upon.

A SNOW-STORM ON THE MOUNTAINS.—Our last night encampment, before reaching Baalbek, was near the mountains of Surghaya, already spoken of. Before retiring to rest that night, I took a look outside our tent, and saw that the new moon was shining beautifully; and I comforted myself with the thought of the good prospect we had of a pleasant day on the morrow, in which to finish *our journey* to Baalbek. But on awaking the next morn-

ing, I found, to my great dismay, that a heavy fall of snow had taken place during the night, and that the snow was still falling fast. The change thus wrought in the landscape around us was very great, for the green fields and blossoming orchards had all put on a mantle of white; but the change in our prospects, though equally great, was by no means so pleasing. Our dragoman was quite willing to proceed without delay; but the muleteer, who owned the horses and donkeys of the party, and who was like a second Cæsar in Rome, declared that it was dangerous to travel in the snow, and that he would not move a step. This was a real dilemma. The idea of being snowed up in that out-of-the-way place, among the mountains, was anything but pleasant. We had long and earnest consultations as to what was to be done. It was finally decided that we should leave the tents and heavy baggage behind us, and continue our journey, taking with us only our small bags and shawl-bundles, which would make a load for one donkey, we becoming responsible for any injury that might happen to the animal from the increased danger of the road.

THE START IN THE SNOW.—We got under way about the middle of the morning. It was snowing hard when we started, and was very cold, though, mercifully for us, there was no wind. With such a wind as we had encountered on some other days, it would have been simply impossible to go on. I mounted my horse with an anxious feeling as to what the result of the journey might be.

The first part of our road led us on winding through deep glens, crossing swollen torrents, climbing over the sides of the mountains, and skirting along steep precipices, made doubly dangerous by the slippery nature of the paths, and the consciousness that a single misstep might plunge both horse and rider down beyond the reach of human help.

ARRIVAL AT BAALBEK.—By noon the snow had ceased to fall. We then left the mountains behind us, and began to cross a wide and undulating plain that lies between the Anti-Lebanon and Lebanon ranges. Between three and four o'clock, as we came over the brow of a hill, the famous city of Baalbek burst suddenly upon our sight, with all its interesting and majestic ruins. Nothing could exceed the beauty of the scene before us, as we came winding slowly down the side of this hill. The whole range of Lebanon was in sight on the other side of the plain. The mountains were all arrayed in spotless white, while gorgeous clouds were mantling their summits, and the sunshine was lighting them up grandly, making altogether a sight most beautiful and inspiring to contemplate. It reminded me, more than anything I have ever seen, of Church's great painting of "The Heart of the Andes."

Our Quarters in Baalbek.—Most travellers pitch their tents during their stay here amidst the ruins of the Temple of the Sun. We should have liked to have done the same, but as we had left our tents behind among the mountains, we could not do this; and even if the tents had been with us, the ground was all covered with snow, so that camping on it would have been anything but pleasant. Our dragoman, however, took us to a house in the modern village, a one-story building, with a sod-covered roof, where we found plain and primitive, but very comfortable, accommodation.

The Situation of Baalbek.—If you look at a map of Palestine and find these three places, Damascus, Baalbek, and Beirut, you will see that if a line were drawn to connect them together, it would make an irregular sort of a triangle. There are two great mountain ranges in the northern part of Palestine. One of these, on the western

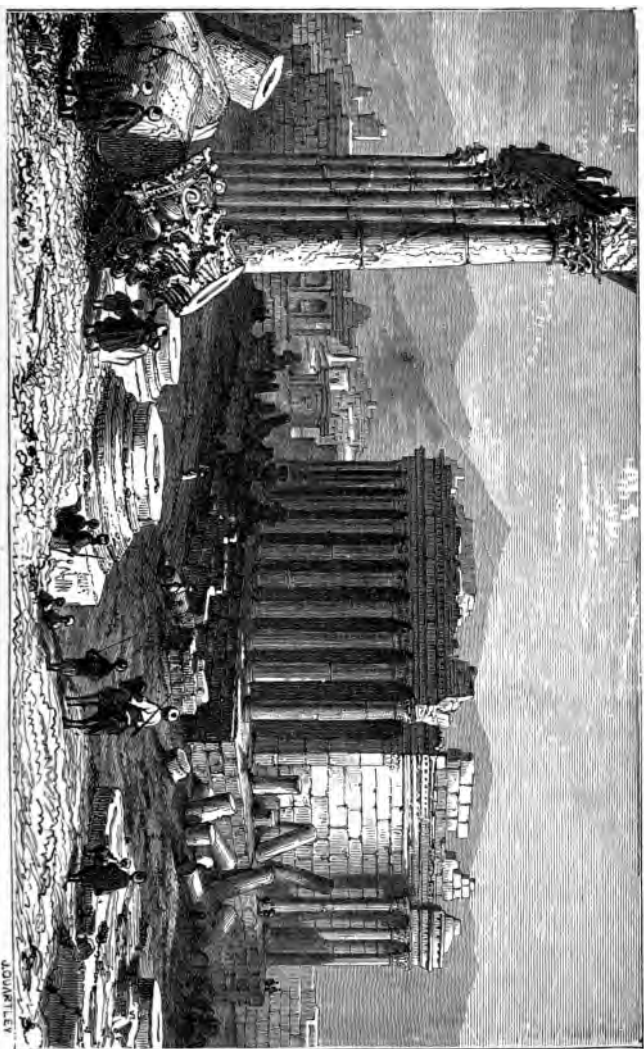
side, or nearest the sea, is the Lebanon range. The celebrated mountain, Lebanon, after which this range is named, which is the highest mountain in Palestine, is in this range. The other range, to the east of this, is the Anti-Lebanon. So we have here the Lebanon range, and the range that is over against it, or the Anti-Lebanon range. Between these two ranges of mountains is a long and fertile plain. It is called the plain of Bukaa. Baalbek is situated in the midst of this plain. It is one of the most beautiful plains I ever saw. We rode across it in going over from Baalbek to Mount Lebanon. And then in going from Lebanon to Beirut, we were a day and a half riding down this plain. In this way we had a good opportunity of seeing and admiring it. The ground is very rich and fertile. It is highly cultivated; and we rode along all the way through large fields, in which the grass was growing and the grain was waving beautifully. In the midst of this plain lies Baalbek, like a little brown island in the bosom of a beautiful green sea. I often shut my eyes and call up the picture which memory took of that broad lovely plain, with the ruined city that lies in the midst of it.

Baalbek as it was and as it is.—It is impossible to give the history of Baalbek. Its foundation and origin are of very early date. Those temples, whose ruins so many people go to look at, were built before the time of our Saviour: they have stood for more than *two thousand years*. But mystery hangs over their early days; and when they were built, or who was the builder of them, no one can tell. Baalbek was once a place of considerable size: it was a walled city, and its walls were two miles in extent. Now it contains not more than a hundred miserable little one-story cabins. There is no hotel in the place:

travellers who come here generally pitch their tents in the court of the larger temple, where they are surrounded by the grand old ruins.

The Ruins of Baalbek.—These are the chief point of interest in this famous place. We spent four days here, and had full opportunity of examining them. They are among the most interesting ruins to be found in the world. There are others more extensive, but none that present finer specimens of all that is most beautiful in architecture and sculpture. The Temple of Jupiter is the gem of the whole. It is larger than the Parthenon at Athens, and is the model after which that was built. Its antiquity is so great that it is not known when or by whom it was planned and erected. Its dimensions are 227 feet by 117. The style is Corinthian. It originally had forty-two columns around it, one hundred and fifty-five feet high and six feet three inches in diameter. Most of the columns have fallen, but nineteen of them are still standing. The walls of the central building remain, but their ornaments are greatly decayed. Some of the most delicate and intricate friezes and cornices are as distinct in figure and as sharp in outline now, after more than twenty centuries have passed over them, as if they were just fresh from the hands of the sculptor. The finest parts of this beautiful structure were destroyed and ruined by the Turks. One miserable pasha put a mine of powder under a portion of it, and blew it up, to get a few shillings' worth of lead from among the stones!

The Temple of Baal, or the Sun, is the most extensive of the ruins. The great court in front of it is 440 feet long by 370 wide. The walls of this court, as well as of the temple itself, are covered with the most elaborate and wonderful ornamentation. Only six of the original columns



RUINS OF POMPEII

1871. H. W. H. L.

are left standing, with the cornice and the entablature above them. These are what are generally seen in pictures of these ruins. Nothing can exceed the exquisite taste and beauty which mark these splendid remains of antiquity. It is scarcely possible to imagine how perfectly magnificent these wonderful buildings must have been when they stood in all their completeness. To see those prostrate columns and broken capitals lying tumbled together in utter confusion, and mouldering to decay, gives rise to very sad emotions ; and yet how impressive the lesson they teach as to the vanity of wealth, intelligence, and skill, when consecrated to any other purpose than the service and glory of the living God !

The Great Stones of Baalbek.—The most surprising thing about these ruins is the Cyclopean nature of the work to which they pertain. In the outer walls of the Temple of the Sun are some of the most enormous stones ever quarried, shaped, and put together by human hands: some of them are sixty feet long and twelve feet square. And about a mile from the village, lying in the quarry from which the stones for these buildings were taken, is one stone even larger still. It lies in an inclined position, shaped, squared, and dressed, but still connected at one end with the native rock to which it originally belonged. We measured this carefully, and found it sixty-eight feet long by fifteen square. We get a better idea of the stupendous dimensions of this stone when we think that, if it were set up on its end and excavated, it would make a four-story house, with the rooms in it fourteen feet square and their ceilings fourteen feet high. It is hard to imagine how such huge masses of solid stone were ever moved from the quarry, or raised to the places which they occupy. I doubt if the appliances of modern art or skill could accom-

plish it. It is calculated that it would require the united strength of forty thousand men, or an engine of eight thousand horse-power, to move one of them.

A Sabbath at Baalbek.—We spent a Sabbath here. In the morning of the day one of my companions and I went by ourselves into the Temple of Jupiter; and sitting down just where the altar formerly stood, we went through the morning service of the Episcopal Church, and then read a sermon. The opening sentences of the Te Deum—



GREAT STONE IN THE QUARRY AT BAALBEK.

“We praise thee, O God; we acknowledge thee to be the Lord,” &c.—sounded very grand and impressive in that old shrine of idolatry. The sermon read on this occasion was one which I had written several years before on the words, “Will a man leave the snow of Lebanon? or shall the cold flowing waters be forsaken?” (Jer. xviii. 14.) Some of the descriptions of the Lebanon range, borrowed from travellers and introduced into the sermon, were so highly wrought that I feared they must be overdrawn; and I took the sermon with me for the purpose of reading it amidst the

scenery which it described. The result was, that I was prepared fully to endorse every utterance of the sermon in regard to the description of the scenery in Lebanon. I have seldom enjoyed a season of worship more than I did that morning service in that old heathen temple. After it was over, my companion and I sat and talked about it, and wondered if any two Christian people had ever before united to worship the God of the Bible in that old home of idolatry.

CHAPTER XV.

FROM BAALBEK TO BEIRUT—THE VILLAGE OF AIN ATA—STARTING FOR
THE CEDARS—THE GROVE OF CEDARS—THE POINTS OF INTEREST
ABOUT LEBANON—THE DESCENT OF LEBANON RANGE—BEIRUT—
OLD TYRE.



FROM BAALBEK TO THE CEDARS OF LEBANON.—We were very anxious to visit those famous cedars; but while sojourning at Baalbek, we had given up the idea of doing so. We thought, naturally enough, that the heavy fall of snow encountered on the mountains before reaching Baalbek, would make it difficult, if not impossible, to reach the summit of the lofty range of Lebanon. Our dragoman proposed to send a messenger to the village at the foot of the mountain, to inquire if it were possible to make the ascent. The man brought back word that it could easily be done. We were surprised at the message, but concluded to go.

Here let me advise future travellers to this region never to repeat our foolish experiment of asking the opinion of the natives on such a subject, or of attempting to approach the cedars so soon after a heavy fall of snow. The men whose opinion was asked think of nothing but the "*back-sheesh*" to be got from a company of travellers, and will always advise everybody to go; and whether the attempt to reach the cedars is successful or not, *they get their pay*, and that is all they care for.

We left Baalbek on the morning of April the 11th—a

bright and beautiful morning; and passing over the magnificent plain in the midst of which the celebrated ruins of that city stand, and then crossing the lower ridges of the Lebanon range, by the middle of the afternoon we reached our camping-place for the night, at the village of

AIN ATA.—This is a wretched little village at the foot of the central range of Lebanon. It is one of the principal points from which the cedars are approached. It is as far as the journey can be made on horseback. Starting from this village, it is necessary to go on foot across the summit of Lebanon, and then down a thousand feet on the other side, to where the "Grove of the Cedars" is situated. It is a most toilsome tramp to take, even when the ground is clear; but the difficulty was greatly increased by the deep snow which covered the mountains.

On our arrival at the village all the inhabitants turned out and gathered round our encampment—men, women, and children squatting on the ground, watching everything that was done, and gazing at us with as much interest and curiosity as though we were beings from another planet.

While dinner was preparing, we took a stroll through the village. All the villages of this land are wretched enough, but this one exceeds in squalid misery anything else we had seen in our wanderings. It is a mere collection of mud hovels; and in some of the best of them we noticed, in passing, that cows, sheep, and goats were herding promiscuously with the human animals who inhabited them.

STARTING FOR THE CEDARS.—We had an early breakfast the next morning, and by seven o'clock were ready for the start. We had engaged *eight* mountaineers to go with us as guides and attendants, each of whom was to receive five *francs* as his pay; but when we came to start, we found a

noisy set of more than *thirty* dirty, ragged-looking fellows, all eager to join the party. We tried our best to send them back, but they would insist on going; and go they did. We found the snow much deeper on the mountains than we had expected. The ascent is very steep and difficult. I had a man on each side of me, and so had my companions. We put an arm round the neck of each of these men, while they clasped their hands behind our backs; and thus, with a sort of living crutch under each arm, we made our ascent. We never could have done it without this help; and even thus assisted, we were obliged to stop every little while to take breath. It was one unbroken ascent, without any intervening level spaces, such as are ordinarily found in mountain-climbing. I could compare it to nothing but *going up stairs in the snow* for three hours at a stretch. In such an operation, with the snow more than a foot deep, it is easy to imagine what the fatigue would be. I never undertook anything so toilsome, and never should have attempted this if I had had an idea of what it would be.

On reaching the summit of the mountain, after this three hours' toil, we found that we were still only a little more than half-way to the cedars. We could see them distinctly far off in the distance, with a deep, unbroken mass of snow all the way between us and them. The idea of three hours more of such toil to reach them, and then five or six hours more to get back again, made us pause. So brother C—— and I concluded at once to go no farther, but to rest satisfied with the distant view of those famous trees which we had from the top of the mountain. A friend who was with us resolved to go on. He was a young man in the prime of life, with great powers of endurance and indomitable perseverance. So we divided our attendants; he

taking half of them and going on, and we taking the other half and returning, after stopping a while to rest and enjoy the prospect. The going down, of course, was much easier than the going up. We needed no help in this ; and we got back to our tents between twelve and one, after five or six hours of as toilsome a tramp as I ever care to take. It would have occupied us at least five hours more to have gone to the cedars and returned, and this was more than we felt either able or willing to undergo. We are perfectly satisfied that ours was the wiser course. For myself, I found that the recent exposure was just about as much as I could bear. I spent the afternoon in resting on my bed, with a basin of melted snow-water near, in which I kept soaking a pocket-handkerchief, and applying it to my head, which was burning like a furnace, with severe throbbing pain. This was the result of exposure to the sun in the morning. And from this experience I am satisfied that if I had not turned back when I did, but had gone on to the cedars, and been exposed to the sun all day, I should never have seen my home again.

Some general remarks about this glorious mountain range may not be out of place here.

LEBANON IN BEAUTY AND GRANDEUR.—There is much connected with such a range of mountains to make them both grand and beautiful. One thing that helps to do this is their *great height*. The loftiest summit of this range is 10,500 feet high. This is the highest mountain in Palestine. At the southern end of this range stands Mount Hermon. This is 9000 feet in height. As we stood on the summit of the Lebanon range, and gazed around, it was easy to understand that the *glorious prospect* which it afforded of all the country around, was another thing which added to the beauty and grandeur of Lebanon. The moun-

tains that lay around us were all covered with a robe of snowy whiteness. At the foot of the mountains, on the eastern side, and lying between the Lebanon and the Anti-Lebanon range, was the wide and fertile plain in the midst of which Baalbek stands. The snow had disappeared from this plain, and its rich fields of grass and grain looked like a beautiful sea between the mountains. The contrast between the dark green colour of this broad plain and the mantle of pure white snow round the mountains made the prospect before us very interesting.

When we turned in the other direction, and looked towards the west, the prospect was different, but still everything we saw was either beautiful or grand. There was the same white robe of snow everywhere, and this is always beautiful. And then, about a thousand feet below us, and at a distance of some miles away, we saw the grove of cedars which we had come so far to visit, and were obliged to go away without actually reaching. This grove appeared like a great mass of deep, dark green, lying right in the bosom of the snowy valley out of which the cedars grow. This was beautiful. And, on every side, the great mountains were lifting their giant forms to the sky, all covered with the same pure robe of snowy white; and this was both beautiful and grand to look at. Beyond the cedars, we could see the mountains sinking down towards the sea; and far away, beyond the base of the mountains, we could see the dark blue waters of the Mediterranean. This shut in the view on that side, and added very much to both the beauty and the grandeur of the view from the top of Lebanon.

In addition to the *height* of Lebanon, and the *extent of prospect* which it affords, the *great variety* that may be seen from this mountain top adds much to the beauty and

grandeur of Lebanon. *We* are accustomed to see only *one* season at a time; and we know that every season of the year has some peculiar beauty about it. But the Arabs are in the habit of saying, that "Lebanon carries winter on its head, spring upon its shoulders, summer in its bosom, while autumn lies sleeping at its feet." And this is strictly true; for this range is composed of four distinct courses of mountains, rising one above the other. The first, or lowest, is fertile, and abounds with grain and fruit; the second is barren and burned; the third enjoys perpetual spring; while the fourth, or highest, is covered with perpetual snow, where winter, with its cold and frost, always reigns.

But, in the second place, we may look at *Lebanon in its usefulness to the land*. God made everything to be useful. The sun, the moon, the stars, the oceans, the rivers, the trees, the plants, the flowers, all have some useful purpose to fulfil. This is true of the *mountains* also. Every mountain was made for some particular purpose. A great mountain range like this of Lebanon may be useful for a variety of purposes; but there are *two* uses which are very plain to us. One of these is *its effect upon the air of the country*. Palestine is a very hot country. The sun shines there with great power. David speaks of the sun in that land as "*smiting*" persons. In Psalm cxxi. 6, he says, "The sun shall not *smite* thee by day." This seems to refer to the great power of the sun. And Jacob complained to his uncle Laban, that "by day the drought" or *heat* "*consumed* him" (Gen. xxxi. 40.) Any one who travels through the Holy Land will be reminded of these passages. It was early spring when we were there, and yet the sun was so hot that I used to ride on horseback all day long with an umbrella, to protect my bald head from its

SCENE IN THE MOUNTAINS



great heat. In midsummer this heat must be terrible. And it seems as if God had put the Lebanon mountains, with their great piles of snow, at the upper end of the country to be a kind of *refrigerator* to the whole land. As the winds of summer blow over those snowy mountain tops, and then come sweeping down over the land, they are the greatest comfort to the inhabitants. They fan them, and cool them, and do them more good than we can tell. When we think of the blessed influence which the Lebanon mountains have on the air of Palestine, in giving it coolness in summer, we see how wonderful God's goodness is, and how much he does to make his people comfortable.

Lebanon is also useful to this land *in supplying it with water*, as well as in cooling the air. The prophet Jeremiah speaks of "*the snow of Lebanon, and its cold flowing waters*" (Jer. xviii. 14). These snows are always melting, and running down the sides of the mountains, as the prophet says, "*in cold flowing waters.*" The famous river Jordan has its source in the springs that gush out from Mount Hermon, and this is one of the mountains belonging to the Lebanon range. Nearly all the other rivers and streams of this land are supplied by the waters which flow down from Lebanon; and the fountains and springs which burst forth in different parts of the land are no doubt all fed by the melting snows of this grand range of mountains. Some of these fountains spring out from the foot of great rocks, like young rivers at the very start. The fulness and force of the water in them is surprising. The heat of summer has no more effect upon them than the cold of winter. They flow on all the year round, with a steadiness that is remarkable. And we cannot account for such fountains, unless we connect them with a source of supply like this *of the melting snows of Lebanon*. God has no doubt made

some underground connection between Lebanon and these different fountains. But who can tell the good that is done to the whole land by these rivers and fountains? The fertility and beauty of the land are due to them. Without them, Palestine, instead of being as it once was, "a land flowing with milk and honey," would always have been a desolate wilderness. And so, when we think of the influence which Lebanon exerts on this land by cooling the air, and supplying it with water, we see how useful this mountain is to the whole country. But there is another thing which makes this mountain interesting to us, and that is, *the Scripture references to Lebanon*. Hardly any part of the Holy Land is more frequently referred to in the Bible than this. There are *more than fifty* places in the Old Testament in which Lebanon is spoken of. We have not time to examine all these passages. In some of them, Lebanon is used as a figure to teach us *the usefulness of Christians*; and in others, to show us *the glory of Christ*. It will be profitable to us if we look at one or two passages in which Lebanon is referred to, in order to show us *how useful we may be if we are Christians*.

In Psalm xcii. 12, David says, "The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree; *he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon*." The cedar of Lebanon grows in a shape that is very beautiful; and beautiful things are useful, because it does us good to look at them. When we are trying to love and serve God, then we are growing beautiful in his sight like the cedars of Lebanon; and we shall be useful, by our example, in persuading others to serve him too.

The prophet Hosea, chap. xiv. 5, in speaking of one who is serving God, says, "He shall grow as the lily, *and cast forth his roots as Lebanon*." This refers to one of the cedars of Lebanon. I suppose the meaning of this is, that

by sending its roots down into the earth, the cedar is able to grow straight and tall, and to have so much strength that the storms which sweep over the mountains cannot blow it down or do it any harm. And this is the way in which we should grow as Christians. To do this, we must have faith in all that God teaches us in the Bible. This faith will be to us like the roots to the cedar tree. And this is what the apostle means when he speaks of Christians as "being *strong in faith*, and giving glory to God." Let us pray that God may "increase our faith," and then we shall "grow as the cedar in Lebanon."

Let us now look at one or two passages in which Lebanon is referred to, in order to show us *the glory of Christ*. In one place he is compared to "the *tower of Lebanon*" (Cant. vii. 4); and in several places it is said that "*the glory of Lebanon* shall be given unto him" (Isa. xxxv. 2; lx. 13). One thing that gives its glory to Lebanon is, the great beauty and grandeur which belong to it. Jesus is like Lebanon in this respect, because there is no beauty or grandeur like his. He is "*the chief among ten thousand, and altogether lovely*."

Another thing that gives Lebanon so much glory is *its great usefulness*. We have seen what a comfort it is to the people of that land, *in the cool air* and the *refreshing waters* which it furnishes. Jesus is to his people everywhere, in this respect, what Lebanon is to the inhabitants of Palestine. All their comforts and blessings come from him. It was to him that David was looking up when he said, "*All my springs are in thee*." And Paul was doing the same when he said, "*My God shall supply all your need from the riches of his grace in Christ Jesus*."

FROM THE BASE OF LEBANON TO BEIRUT.—We spent two nights on the road in accomplishing this part of our

journey. I will only refer to the last of these. I find it thus spoken of in my journal :—

“Thursday evening, April 14th.—We have pitched our tents to-night for the last time during the present journey. Our encampment is in a sheltered dell, far enough up the side of the mountain to be within reach of the snow again. It is a wild, romantic spot ; several mountain torrents are rushing by within a few feet of our tent, so that we shall go to sleep to-night lulled by the pleasant sound of the music which their waters make. There is every appearance of rain before morning, which would be by no means an agreeable accompaniment to our last day’s ride. The mountain blasts are sweeping rudely past us, and shaking our tent in a style that reminds us continually of our midnight mishap last week at Barada.”

The thought that this was to be our last night in camp was by no means an unpleasant one ; for though we had experienced great enjoyment in this trip, yet the fatigues and exposures and manifold inconveniences of tent-life make the prospect of returning to a more comfortable mode of living a very welcome one. We expect to reach Beirut to-morrow, and take leave of our dragoman and his company.

THE LAST DAY’S RIDE.—This was perfectly charming ; the morning was cool, cloudy, and pleasant—the very thing for horseback exercise. It was such a day as I should have selected if I had had my choice. I was able to ride all day without the inconvenience of holding an umbrella on the one hand, or the fear of a sun-stroke on the other. The first part of it was along the base of the Lebanon range, and in view of the beautiful plain of which I have before spoken as lying spread out, a vast expanse of fertile loveliness, between the Lebanon and Anti-Lebanon moun-

tains. Great Hermon—all robed in snow—has been in sight all day on one side of us, and Jebel Sunnim, one of the highest peaks of Lebanon, on the other. Early in the afternoon, at a place called Ishtorah, we struck the fine turnpike road that runs from Damascus to Beirut. This is a splendid macadamized road, solid as a rock and smooth as a garden-walk. It was built by a French company, which runs a diligence daily from each end of the line. It was pleasant to look upon a good, broad, smooth road again, after travelling so long over rough, rocky bridle-paths. With the exception of the road from Jaffa to Jerusalem, and this from Damascus to Beirut, Palestine, in all its length and breadth, has not a single road that deserves the name, or along which a wheeled conveyance of *any* kind could be driven. It was quite refreshing, also, to see waggons, or anything that goes on wheels, after so long an acquaintance with mules, donkeys, and camels as the only means of transportation. The road of which I am now speaking winds along by zigzags till it climbs over the summit of Lebanon.

The scenery was the most charming of any we have seen in all Syria. I could not help feeling all day that "the good wine was kept till now." We passed a succession of gorges of the wildest possible character. I was continually reminded of one part or another of the descriptions I had quoted in my sermon on Lebanon, referred to in the last chapter as having been read in the Temple of Jupiter, at Baalbek, on the Sunday we spent there. It was most interesting to me to notice how thoroughly accurate and true to the very life those descriptions were. Many of the mountains are terraced to their very summits. The grandeur, the beauty, the fertility, and the endless variety of all that makes up the picturesque and sublime in land-

scape scenery, as here presented, must be witnessed to be understood. No verbal description can convey any adequate idea of it. It is impossible to overstate the simple truth.

This ride has gone far to remove the unfavourable impression made on my mind by our disagreeable experience in the attempt to reach the cedars, so that, after all, I shall carry away with me a most delightful recollection of the charming nature of this whole Lebanon range. It might well be spoken of as "*that goodly mountain*." This was part of the land *promised* to Israel, though never yet *possessed* by them. But in the glorious future that yet awaits that chosen race in this wonderful land, they will doubtless occupy it to the uttermost. And then it shows what this whole land is capable of becoming when possessed by an energetic people, under a good, strong government, and especially with God's blessing resting upon it instead of his curse.

This last day's experience, taking it altogether, formed a beautiful close to our journey of almost forty days through this wonderful land. It filled my heart with adoring gratitude to our covenant God, who had so graciously watched over us in all the way we had gone, and had now crowned that journey with so distinguishing a mark of his loving-kindness and tender mercy.

We reached Beirut about the middle of the afternoon, and secured very comfortable quarters in the Hotel d'Orient. Our chamber windows overlooked the sea, on which we were next to journey. The next day we settled with our dragoman, without a word of disagreement. This was very satisfactory, and we gave him a strong recommendation.

Thus ended our ramblings in "the Land of the Bible."

I will finish this chapter with some account of Beirut and of Old Tyre.

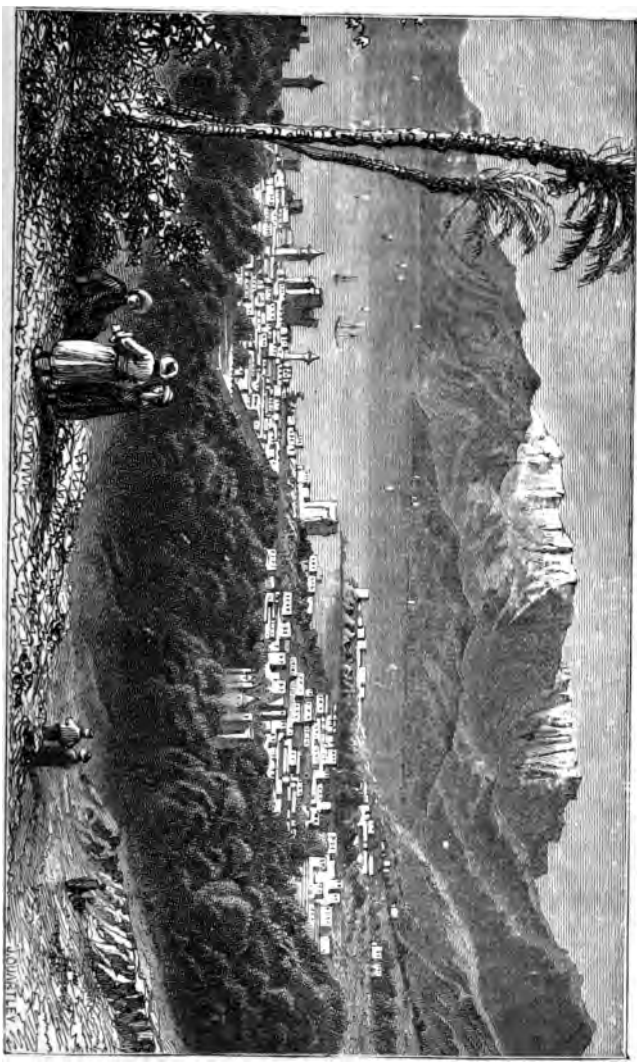
BEIRUT.—The engraving on the opposite page gives a good view of what is generally the last place visited by travellers in the Holy Land. I say *generally* the last, though sometimes it is the first place at which they stop—the starting-point of their journey. There are only two seaport towns now in that part of Palestine that borders on the Mediterranean Sea. One of these is Jaffa, or the Joppa of the Bible; this is in the southern part of the country, and is the place where people land who intend going up to Jerusalem: the other is Beirut, the place to which our picture refers.

It was different in the time of our Saviour. Then there were three other important seaport towns besides the two of which we have just spoken. One of these was Caesarea, which is often spoken of in the New Testament; this was about twenty or thirty miles north of Jaffa. The other two were Tyre and Sidon; these were further north, between Mount Carmel and Beirut. In our Saviour's time these were large and flourishing cities, but now they are only ruins.

If persons enter the Holy Land from the north, then they land at Beirut, and, after finishing their travels, leave the country by taking the steamer at Jaffa. But if they land at Jaffa, as we did, then they travel up through the country, making Beirut their last stopping-place, and taking the steamer here for Smyrna, or whatever other place they may wish to visit.

The Situation of Beirut.—This town is most beautifully situated; it lies directly on the shore of the Mediterranean Sea, some of the streets reaching down to the edge of the water, and others running up the sloping sides of the hills

BEIRUT AND THE MOUNTAINS OF LEBANON.



which rise up behind the town. If you look at the picture, to the right of the town and lying behind it you see a long range of high mountains; these are the Lebanon range. There is no more beautiful scenery anywhere than that which is found among these mountains. The road which leads from Damascus to Beirut runs across the Lebanon mountains. In descending these mountains towards Beirut, the views around are uncommonly beautiful. You can look right over the town, seeing the deep blue waters of the Mediterranean on one hand, and on the other the grand mountains of Lebanon, with their summits covered with snow.

Its Prosperous State.—This town has a population of about sixty thousand; about twenty thousand of these are Mohammedans, and the rest Christians and Jews. Most of the towns in Palestine have an old appearance, and seem to be going to decay; but it is not so with Beirut. This place is growing rapidly, and many of the buildings are new and handsome. The harbour is sometimes quite crowded with vessels, and in connection with these a great deal of business is carried on. There are many large warehouses and stores here, which seem to be very prosperous.

As Jaffa, in the south, is the seaport town of Jerusalem, so Beirut, at the north, is the seaport town of Damascus. This city is sixty miles distant; but a good road connects the two places together, and a "diligence," as it is called, which is a large stage, runs from one place to the other every day.

The Missions and Schools of Beirut.—These institutions interested us during our stay at this place more than anything else. For many years now, missionaries both from America and from England have been labouring here with great success. They not only preach the gospel,

but have established schools and a college, in which large numbers of young people from different parts of the country are receiving a Christian education. The missionaries have a printing-press here also, which is occupied in printing not only school-books in the Arabian language, but good, religious books, which are scattered throughout the country, and doing much good. They are also occupied in printing the best of all books—the Bible—for the use of the people in the Holy Land.

How greatly the people of this country need education, we may judge from a story told by the Rev. Mr. Jessup, one of the American missionaries at Beirut. He knew a native doctor, who begged of him some old newspapers. The good missionary was greatly surprised when he found out what use the *learned* doctor had made of these papers. He cut them up into small pieces; these he soaked, first in water and then in oil, and then gave them to his patients as medicine. The doctor assured the missionary that he had found this medicine very successful. In other instances, native physicians have been known to be in the habit of writing their prescriptions on pieces of paper, and then requiring the sick persons to lick this off! I have heard of persons in this country who are in the habit of saying that “they always took their physician’s *prescriptions*, but never took his medicine.” But this is a new way of taking a prescription.

OLD TYRE.—This is one of the famous places of the Holy Land. Being on the sea-coast, it was out of our way as we passed up through the land. We reserved it for the last, intending to make an excursion to it from Beirut. But this was not found convenient, and so we were obliged to content ourselves with finding out what others have said of it: this was the best we could do.

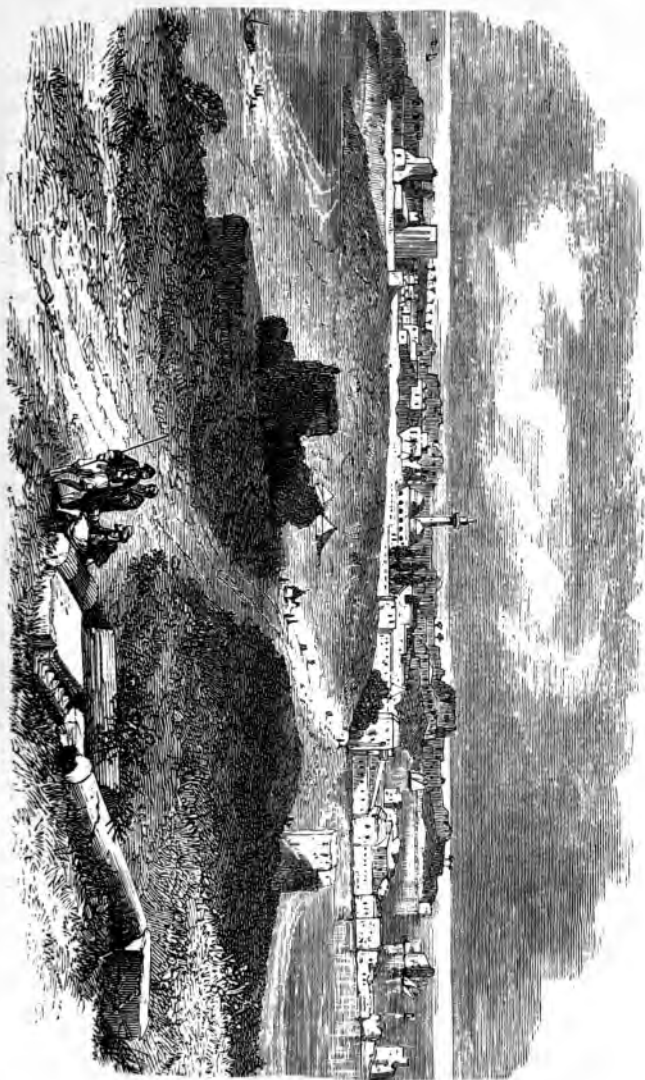
The engraving on the opposite page gives a view of the ruins of this interesting old city. We read a great deal in the Bible about Tyre; we find it spoken of at the time when the Israelites under Joshua conquered the land of Canaan: and even at that early time it is described as "a strong city" (Joshua xix. 29).

Let us look a little at the history of this famous city. There were two cities by the name of Tyre: one of them was on the mainland, and was called "Old Tyre;" the other was built on a small island about half a mile from the shore.

Old Tyre was a rich and flourishing city in the days of Solomon; it was a seaport town with a fine harbour; it was a great place for ships; most of the sailors in the world at that day belonged to Tyre: for this reason it was called "the merchant city,"—"the crowning city whose merchants were princes." In the markets of Tyre were found the choicest products of every country in the world. We have a long and interesting account of these in the 27th chapter of Ezekiel. The ships of Tyre sailed to every port in the Mediterranean Sea; and outside of this sea there was very little sailing done in those days.

But while Tyre was in the height of its prosperity, and was one of the richest and strongest cities in the world, God told his servant Ezekiel to write a wonderful prophecy about it. We find this prophecy in the 12th and 21st verses of the 26th chapter of Ezekiel; it reads thus: "And they shall break down thy walls, and destroy thy pleasant houses: and *they shall lay thy stones and thy timber and thy dust in the midst of the water.* And thou shalt be no more: though thou be sought for, *yet shalt thou never be found again,* saith the Lord God."

There are two things to notice in this prophecy which



are very strange : one is that "the stones and timbers" of Old Tyre should be cast into the sea ; the other is that all trace of the old city should be so taken away that it would be impossible to tell where it had once stood. Let us see how these things were brought to pass.

Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, came with a great army and besieged Old Tyre ; the siege lasted for thirteen years. When the people in the city found that it was likely to be taken, they made use of their ships to go over to the island, half a mile from the shore. They built a new city there. They carried all their property and everything of any value from the old city, and left it empty. When Nebuchadnezzar took the city, he found it stripped of all that was valuable : he was like a boy climbing up a tree to get a bird's nest ; he gets it at last, but finds neither eggs nor birds in it. This made him very angry. So he "broke down the walls, and destroyed the pleasant houses" of the city, as the prophet had said, and left the old city all in ruins.

But the island city, or New Tyre, became richer and stronger than the old city had been. The island was only about a mile in length. The city covered it all over ; its strong walls were built on solid rocks that rose out of the sea. But its greatest strength was in the fact of its being an island, with half a mile of sea flowing between it and the mainland ; this made it impossible for an army to reach it. In this way the prophecy of Ezekiel *began* to be fulfilled.

A good many years after this, another great conqueror came and finished all the rest of Ezekiel's prophecy about Tyre. This was Alexander the Great. When he set out to conquer the world, he marched through Palestine ; he came to the ruins of Old Tyre, and resolved to conquer the

island city of New Tyre. But he had no ships in which to reach it. So he set his army to work to build a road or causeway out into the sea, in order to reach the island on which Tyre stood. In making this causeway he employed the ruins of Old Tyre. These were all carried away and thrown into the sea. And so the words of the prophet were exactly fulfilled, in which he said of Tyre, "Thy stones and thy timber shall be laid in the midst of the water." This was done so completely that none of the ruins of the old city were left. And now, for hundreds of years, it is true of Tyre as the prophet said, "Thou shalt be no more: though thou be sought for, *yet shall thou never be found again.*"

Alexander took the city, but did not destroy it; for hundreds of years afterwards it remained a flourishing city. But there was another prophecy about this New Tyre, which has been fulfilled also. When this island city was in the height of its prosperity, full of wealth and of people, God said he would make it "*like the top of a rock; a place to spread nets upon*" (Ezek. xxvi. 14). This prophecy has been fulfilled as exactly as the other; for long years past the island Tyre has been nothing but a miserable fishing village. Where its proud palaces once stood, it is now desolate and bare, "*like the top of a rock.*" Every one who goes to see it is reminded of these prophecies; and as he sees the fisherman come home from fishing and spread out his nets upon the rocks, he can't help saying to himself, "What a wonderful book the Bible is! and how certain it is that every word spoken in it will surely come to pass!"

And this winds up all I have to say about what is strictly "the Land of the Bible." But as our journey,

after leaving Beirut, still lay for some time among places that are intimately connected with the history of the New Testament, especially with the missionary labours of Paul, the great "apostle of the Gentiles," we may continue our rambles a little longer, and still find ourselves in "Bible lands."

CHAPTER XVI.

FROM BEIRUT TO SMYRNA—TRIPOLI—LAODICEA—ANTIOCH—ALEXANDRETTA—MERSINE—TARSUS—CYPRUS—RHODES—PATMOS.



WE left Beirut on board one of the French steamers which are now found plying all over the Mediterranean. These are splendid vessels, ably manned, and furnished with every attention to the comfort as well as the safety of passengers. We were bound for Smyrna, but not by a direct route. Our vessel was on a trading voyage all round the eastern end of the Mediterranean, stopping at the different towns along the coast to take in or put out cargo. This would be a tedious mode of travel for persons with whom "time was money;" but for a company of tourists like ourselves, whose great object was to go as far and see as much as we could, where we had never been before, and were not likely to go again, it was just the thing to be desired.

As the steamer on which we embarked was the first arrival from Jaffa after the conclusion of the Easter festival at Jerusalem, we feared that it would be very much crowded, owing to the rush of returning pilgrims. This was to have been expected; but, to our great relief, we found but few passengers on board. This was accounted for by the fact that when the steamer arrived at Jaffa, it was too rough for her to anchor. Jaffa is destitute of any harbour. There is nothing there but an open roadstead

for vessels to anchor in. In smooth weather this answers very well; but when there is a heavy swell on, or when the weather is rough, the anchorage is not safe. This happened to be the case when our steamer arrived off the town of Jaffa, and so she was obliged to keep on her course without stopping. This was a great disappointment to the crowds of pilgrims eager to embark there, and who would be obliged to wait for ten days till the next steamer came along. But it secured to us much better accommodations for our voyage than we should otherwise have had.

A PLEASANT SAIL.—Nothing can exceed the beauty of the scenery that meets the eye of the traveller as he sails along the coast of the northern part of Syria. We were favoured with charming weather. A bright sun and a clear blue sky gave added interest to the landscape. We were sailing along with Lebanon's magnificent range of mountains in full view. In some places the mountains seem to rise sheer out from the sea. Again they are seen lying off in grand majestic slopes, rising one above another, till their snow-capped summits are lost from view in the great masses of beautiful white clouds that mantle and rest upon them.

TRIPOLI.—This was our first stopping-place. After our first night on shipboard, we found our steamer anchored here, on rising the next morning. This is not the Tripoli of northern Africa, but a town of the same name, though of lesser note, in northern Syria. This is an ancient town, which took its name of "the triple city" from three settlements made by different colonies, and out of which the city took its rise. It has a population of some thirteen thousand people. The appearance of the town is very picturesque. Orchards of orange, lemon, apricot, and apple trees encompass it. Near the town is an old castle, that

dates back to the twelfth century, and was built by Count Raymond of Toulouse, during the time of the Crusades.

Our steamer lay at anchor here all day, transacting about as much business as we, in this country, would have gotten through with in an hour. Tripoli has but little commerce, as Beirut is rapidly absorbing all the trade of the coast. A few bales of silk and some boxes of sponges make up its chief articles of export.

This is a favourite point from which to start on excursions to the cedars. They can be reached in about a ten hours' toilsome ride from this place. The ascent is said to be very exciting. The road winds through sublime glens, zigzags up rocky acclivities, and passes over stone-strewn terraces. Villages are seen perched upon the mountain side, where one would think that the foot of man could scarcely find a resting-place. Terraces run up the acclivities, and each step has its row of mulberries or vines.

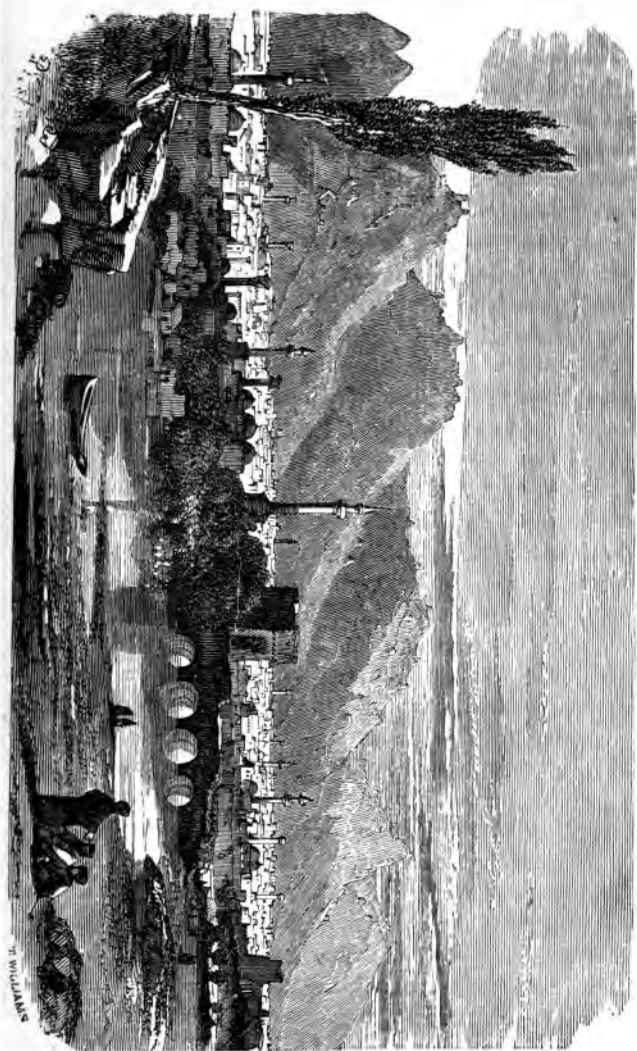
LAODICEA.—This was our next stopping-place. It is not the city spoken of in the Revelation, to which one of the seven epistles was addressed. That was an inland city in Asia Minor, and this is a seaport town of northern Syria. It is now called Ladikiyeh, or Latichea. It has a population of about five thousand inhabitants; it is finely situated on a rocky promontory which projects two miles into the sea, and has an elevation of from 100 to 200 feet. Its chief article of export is tobacco, which is said to be of a particularly fine character; silk, cotton, oil, and a few other articles, are also staple commodities of this place. A Protestant mission has been established here, and carried on with encouraging success. It is now under the charge of the American Board.

ANTIOCH.—The next point of interest in this journey which we passed, but without stopping at it, was Antioch.

In speaking about this city, there are several things to notice. One of these is *the situation of Antioch*. It lies on the banks of the river Orontes. It is about thirty miles distant from the sea-coast, and about three hundred miles north from Jerusalem. The range of the Lebanon mountains comes to an end near Antioch, but the sight of them in the distance helps to make the country around this city look very beautiful. It is built at the foot of a steep and craggy mountain called Mount Sulpius, which rises up directly behind the city. There used to be a very large and beautiful grove or forest near Antioch, in which was a temple for the worship of the god Apollo and the goddess Diana. This grove was called Daphne. It was ten miles in circumference, and was full of beautiful fountains and streams of clear, cold water, which made it a very pleasant place of resort in that warm climate. The remains of this grove may still be seen, though much of its beauty is gone.

The history of Antioch is another interesting thing connected with it. It was built about three hundred years before Christ. Few cities have suffered more from attacks of earthquakes than this. Nine or ten times it has been visited by this terrible evil. By one of these attacks, in the sixth century, as many as two hundred thousand of the inhabitants were destroyed in one day. The last earthquake that visited this place was only a few years ago. It killed a great many people, and destroyed a number of the finest buildings in the city.

At one time there were as many as a hundred thousand Christians living in Antioch, but at present the number is not over one thousand. This city has been adorned from time to time with very large and splendid buildings, such as temples, palaces, aqueducts, amphitheatres, and baths.



These are interesting, even in their ruins. As we look upon them, they show us how little we should think of earthly wealth or greatness, because they so soon pass away. And they suggest to us how eager we should be to secure the riches that Jesus gives, because these are "*durable riches.*" Earthly houses and palaces crumble and decay; but the home that Jesus is preparing for us is "*a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.*" No one will ever look upon the ruins of *that* house.

But, after all, *Antioch's connection with the Bible* is the chief thing for which we feel an interest in it. Next to Jerusalem, there is no city more frequently mentioned in connection with the early history of the Church than this. One of the seven deacons appointed to distribute the alms of the church at Jerusalem was "*Nicholas, a proselyte of Antioch*" (Acts vi. 5). The Christians who were scattered from Jerusalem by the persecution that arose on the death of Stephen, came to Antioch and preached the gospel (Acts xi. 19). Agabus and the other prophets, when they foretold the famine that was approaching, left Jerusalem and came to Antioch (Acts xi. 27). When Paul and Barnabas were sent from Jerusalem on a mission of charity to the churches, the first place to which they came was Antioch (Acts xii. 25). It was at Antioch that Paul rebuked Peter for the want of manly decision. The Pope of Rome professes to be the successor of Peter; and he claims to be infallible, or never to make a mistake. If this is so, then he has got far ahead of Peter; for he *did* make a mistake, and Paul reproved him for it, in this same city of Antioch, as we read in Galatians ii. 11, 12. Antioch was the place where the apostle Paul began his early labours among the Gentiles; and it was from here that he went forth on his

missionary journeys, in which he carried the gospel of Jesus all through the Roman world.

And then there is another thing which makes this place especially interesting to us. We read in Acts xi. 26, "*And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch.*" We are not told how this name came to be applied to the followers of Jesus. We do not know whether they made choice of it themselves, or whether it was given to them by their enemies. And it does not matter how it was. To be a Christian, means to be like Jesus; and if we only *are* what this name represents, if we are true Christians, then there is no greater honour than to bear this name. It has been well said: "This is an honoured name—the most honourable that can be applied to a mortal. It is the distinguishing name of all the redeemed. This binds them all together—a name which rises above every other name; which unites in one the inhabitants of distant nations and tribes of men; which connects the extremes of society, placing them in most important respects on a common level, for who lives according to this name is the most favoured of mortals. For this is a name which will be had in remembrance when the names of royalty shall be forgotten, and when the distinctions of nobility shall cease to amuse or dazzle the world." May God give us all grace to live as becometh those who bear the name first given to the disciples at Antioch—the honoured name of Christian!

ALEXANDRETTA.—About four o'clock in the afternoon we came to anchor off this city, which must not be confounded with Alexandria in Egypt. It is beautifully situated at the head of a bay which forms the extreme eastern portion of the Mediterranean Sea. It is the outlet to Aleppo, Bagdad, and other interior towns, whose mer-

chandise is conveyed across the desert on camels, and over the mountains on mules and donkeys, and brought here to be shipped for Europe. Our steamer lay at anchor here all the next day, taking in freight. It rained through the morning, which interfered with this work, as well as spoiled some plans formed by the officers of the vessel and sundry of the passengers to go ashore and have a hunt among the wild mountains that surround this bay.

MERSINE.—We left Alexandretta about eight o'clock that night, and came to anchor at five the next morning off a place called Mersine. Here we spent the Sabbath, with quiet exercises in our state-room. This is a little town at the extreme eastern part of Asia Minor, not to be confounded with Messina on the island of Sicily. The country around it has been the scene of many great and sanguinary conflicts. Persians, Greeks, and Romans have all in turn marched and fought over it. In the neighbourhood of this town is the river from bathing in which Alexander nearly met his death. At about an hour's ride there is an extensive ruin, connected with the name of the great Pompey. Some of the passengers went to visit it. We should have joined them had it not been Sunday.

But much more interesting to us was the fact that but a few miles distant from this little town are the remains of that "no mean city" where the great apostle of the Gentiles had his birth, and of which he was a citizen. It was more than "a Sabbath day's journey," and not exactly the occupation for the day. But if we could have controlled the time and movements of our steamer for the following day, we should certainly have tarried long enough there to have made a pilgrimage to the place where that wonderful man was born and brought up.

TARSUS.—This is an interesting place, not only on

account of the beauty of its situation, but also on account of its connection with a great general and a great apostle. This general was Alexander the Great, who conquered the world; and this apostle was Paul, the greatest preacher of the gospel that ever lived. We have something to say about each of these three things in connection with this city; we may begin by speaking of

The Situation of Tarsus.—It is in the province of Cilicia, in the eastern part of Asia Minor. If you can get a Bible atlas, and turn to the map of the journeys of the apostle Paul, you can easily find this city. It is situated on a level plain, about seven miles from the sea. This plain is bounded on one side by the sea, and on the other by the Taurus Mountains. When we sailed along the coast of Asia Minor, the tops of these mountains were covered with snow; this made them look very beautiful. There is a river that formerly ran through the city of Tarsus, but now flows by about half a mile from it; it is called the Cydnus, and is fed by the melting snows from the mountains that lie behind the city.

Before the time of our Saviour, Tarsus was a large and beautiful city. The inhabitants were very wealthy, and the city was celebrated for its many schools, and for the great learning of its teachers. But these have long since passed away. The present number of the inhabitants is about thirty thousand; these are mostly poor. The buildings are generally of only one story, with flat, terraced roofs.

Let us now notice the next thing that interests us in the city of Tarsus. This is *its connection with Alexander the Great*. This famous general gained a great victory in the neighbourhood of Tarsus. Here he met the Persian

army commanded by King Darius. Alexander had but thirty thousand men, while the Persians had many times that number; yet, after a hard-fought battle, Darius fled from the field, and his army was scattered and defeated. His mother, his wife, his two daughters, and his infant son were taken prisoners, but were treated with the greatest kindness by Alexander. On another occasion, this great man came very near losing his life in Tarsus. One day, when he was fatigued with riding and was in a great heat, he went in to bathe in the river Cydnus. The water of the river was so cold, that the shock which it gave him made him very sick; but by the skill and care of his favourite physician he was brought safely through, and enabled soon to take his place again at the head of the army. Julius Cæsar spent much of his time here, and was so fond of the place that he called it Juliopolis, and conferred upon it the freedom of a Roman city. This was the privilege of which Paul took advantage when he was threatened with scourging, declaring himself free born.

Our chief interest in Tarsus, however, grows out of *its connection with Paul*, the great apostle. We always think and speak of him as "Paul of Tarsus." He was born here, and received his education first in those schools for which Tarsus was so celebrated, and afterwards at Jerusalem, where "he was brought up at the feet of Gamaliel." It is interesting to think that when Paul was a boy he played on the plains around Tarsus, and often climbed, no doubt, up the hills that lie behind it.

When he became a Christian, Paul spent five years at Tarsus, preaching the gospel to the people of his native city. Great numbers of the people were converted by his labours there. The city contains a small church, which *has a very ancient appearance, and is said to have been*

founded by this great apostle. In the burying-ground at Tarsus there is a very venerable-looking tree, which, according to the belief of the inhabitants, was planted by Paul's own hand. He seems to have been very proud of his native city, for on one occasion we find him saying of himself, "I am a Jew of Tarsus, a city in Cilicia, a citizen of *no mean city*" (Acts xxi. 39). On another occasion he speaks of himself as having been "*free born*." This means that his father had been made a citizen of Rome, and thus he, by birth, became so too. This was considered a great honour in those days. And it was a great privilege, too, to be a Roman citizen. Such a citizen could not be bound or scourged, as other men might be, when they were prisoners, unless really found guilty of very wicked conduct, and then he lost this privilege. We find Paul taking advantage of this privilege on several occasions. One of these we read of in Acts xxii. 24-29. Here the captain of the Roman soldiers at Jerusalem gave orders to have Paul bound, and scourged with rods. But when he said he was a Roman citizen, they stopped this at once. And it is said, "the chief captain also was afraid, after he knew that he was a Roman, because he had bound him."

The apostle Paul was one of the noblest men that ever belonged to the Church of Jesus Christ. No one can tell how great a blessing his epistles have been to the Church. We all have cause to thank God for having raised up such a man. And Tarsus must always be a place of great interest to us, *because Paul was born there*.

CYPRUS.—Passing on from Mersine, the seaport of Tarsus, along the shores of Asia Minor, we sailed in full view of Cyprus, which is interesting to the Christian traveller because of its connection with Bible history.

This is one of the largest islands in the Mediterranean Sea, and next to Sicily in importance. If you look at the map of this sea, you will find the island of Cyprus in the eastern part of it. If you draw a line from Tyre or Sidon, on the coast of Palestine, and run it out in a north-westerly direction, it will strike this island about the centre of it.

Its Size and Appearance.—Cyprus is about a hundred and forty miles long; in the narrowest part it is not more than five miles wide, and the broadest part is about fifty miles in width. It has a range of mountains running through the island in the direction of its length; the highest point in this range used to be called Olympus. It is about seven thousand feet high.

The shores of the island are generally high and rocky. It has many rocky headlands, which stand boldly out into the sea. On this account it used to be called in old times "the *horned island*," because some of these points were thought to look like horns.

Its Climate and Productions.—It used to be considered a very healthy place, but it is not so now; and it is easy to see how this change has taken place. The rivers and streams which flow down from the mountains have been allowed to get choked up. This has turned the plains along their banks into marshes, and these give rise to fevers and other diseases, which would soon disappear if proper care was taken of the country. The soil of this island is very fertile; it used to be so famous for its fertility, that in old times it was called "the happy land." The productions of the island are many and valuable: cotton, and wine, and tobacco, and silk, and fruits of various kinds and of the finest qualities, are produced here; various dye-woods and drugs are also grown on this island. Diamonds and other precious stones, with valuable metals,

especially copper, are found here. When this island was covered with forest trees, ship-building was carried on to a great extent; the people used to boast that everything needed in building and furnishing these ships was to be found on their island.

Its Population and History.—In former times, as many as a million of people lived upon this island; but now, owing to the want of a good government, there are only about one hundred thousand, or a tenth part of what the population used to be. The island is often visited by swarms of locusts, that devour every green thing, and leave the land like a desolate wilderness. Before the Christian religion was introduced here, the people used to worship Venus, a goddess of the Greeks and Romans; a splendid temple to her honour was built in the city of Paphos, in the western part of the island, which was one of its principal towns. The worship of Venus was long in existence here, and so thoroughly demoralizing were the licentious rites connected with this worship, that even down to this day the term *Cyprian* applied to a female denotes that she is lost to all sense of true modesty or virtue.

Its Connection with the Bible.—The island of Cyprus is spoken of several times in the New Testament. Salamis, on the eastern coast of the island, and Paphos, on the western, are the principal cities of this island. Barnabas, “the son of consolation,” and Paul’s companion in labour, was a native of Cyprus; and when he and Paul were first sent forth from Antioch to carry the glad tidings of salvation to the Gentiles, they embarked at Seleucia, in Syria, for Cyprus, as we read in Acts xiii. 2–4: “As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. And when they had fasted and prayed,

and laid their hands on them, they sent them away. So they, being sent forth by the Holy Ghost, departed unto Seleucia ; and from thence they sailed to Cyprus." They landed at Salamis, and went all through the island to Paphos. Pleasant to Barnabas it must have been to come back to his native place, and proclaim among his own people the wonders of redeeming love. Barnabas paid a second visit to this island, accompanied by Mark, as is recorded in Acts xv. 39. According to the tradition of the fathers, he finally took up his residence here, and at last finished his ministry by a martyr's death.

In Cyprus also dwelt Sergius Paulus, the deputy who was converted by the preaching of Paul and Barnabas. It was here, too, that "Elymas the sorcerer" sought to oppose the apostles, and was punished with blindness by Paul for his wickedness ; and here also "*Mnason, the old disciple,*" who showed hospitality to Paul at Jerusalem, had his home (Acts xxi. 16).

When Paul started on his last journey to Rome, we read that he "*sailed under Cyprus*" (Acts xxvii. 4). This is the last mention made of this island in the New Testament. As the great apostle passed by in sight of the rocky coasts and the high mountains of Cyprus, he must have been reminded of many pleasant seasons that he and Barnabas had enjoyed together, when they were telling the story of Jesus and his love to the inhabitants of Cyprus. As we continued our course with favouring breezes, with a smooth sea and a bright sky, in full view of the island of Cyprus, these Bible associations with it could not fail of imparting great interest and enjoyment to the feeling with which we gazed upon the distant outlines of its features while ploughing our westward way through the dark waters of the Mediterranean.

FROM CYPRUS TO RHODES.—We have spoken of our voyage from Tarsus to Cyprus. We did not land on this island, but sailed by it on the west. It was a very delightful sail. Indeed, all our recollections of the Mediterranean are of the very pleasantest kind. We had heard so much of the stormy character of this sea, and of the distressing effect of its storms on those inclined to sea-sickness, that we dreaded greatly to trust ourselves to its waters. But never did experience run more directly counter to expectation than in our own case.

PLEASANT MEMORIES OF THE MEDITERRANEAN.—We were twenty-three days in all sailing on this great inland sea. Each of those days has its own particular recollection; but they are all of an agreeable character. Our first sail on the Mediterranean was from Leghorn to Naples; this was mainly by night. It was moonlight; the sea was smooth, and we sat up on deck all night to enjoy the beauty of the scene. We sailed up the Bay of Naples between three and four o'clock in the morning, and had our first view of Mount Vesuvius in the resplendent light of a clear, full moon. Such was our introduction to the Mediterranean. Of course we may say of *that* night, as the Bible says of another, that it was "a night to be had in remembrance." It is not likely soon to be forgotten.

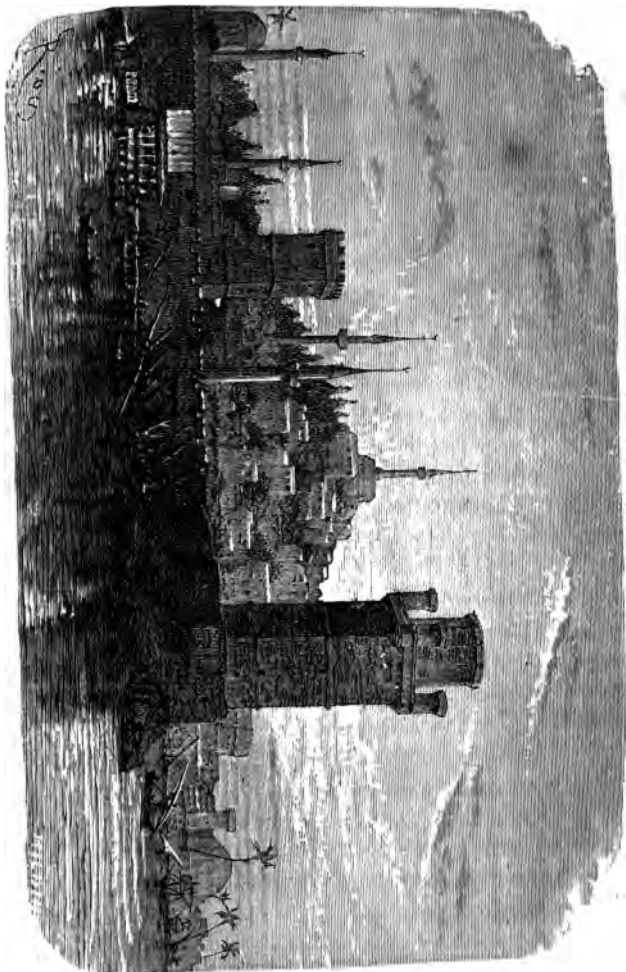
Our farewell to the Mediterranean was quite in keeping with our introduction to it: it was a sail from the island of Corfu—the gem of all the isles of Greece—to Brindisi; and this was a night's sail too; yes, and a moonlight night also. As our steamer ploughed her majestic way through the placid waters of the Adriatic, in the lofty range of whose classic shores it may well be said "there is not a mountain lifts its head unsung," we felt that this

was a fitting close to our acquaintance with the great sea that washes the shores of three continents.

The *day* we spent between Cyprus and Rhodes was in harmony with the *nights* just spoken of. We had a clear sky, a bright sun, and a fresh, favouring breeze, that enabled us to use our fore and aft sails as well as our engine; there was a sparkling sea around us, of a beautiful deep blue colour; while the Taurus range of mountains previously mentioned were in full view all day on our right, with their summits wrapped in snow—a magnificent sight; thus combining every element that could be desired to make a most splendid sail. The vessel was steady as a rock all day, without the least rolling or pitching; so that there was nothing to interfere with the enjoyment of those who find such motion a source of trouble. I enjoyed it vastly; it was a real delight to pace the quarter-deck beneath the outspread awning, or to sit and read fanned by the cooling breeze, and drinking in the inspiration of the surrounding loveliness.

THE ISLAND OF RHODES.—After losing sight of Cyprus, we continued our voyage. The next morning our vessel was lying at anchor off this celebrated island. The Mediterranean Sea is famous for its many islands, and prominent among them is the island of Rhodes. We went ashore here; and as our boat approached the land, the island, the harbour, and the city of Rhodes presented a very fine picture. On landing, we were very much interested in walking about the curious old town. In speaking about this island, the chief things for us to notice are, *the geography of the island, its history, and its great statue.*

The Geography of Rhodes.—It is not a very large island, and is somewhat triangular in shape; it is about forty-five



THE CITY OF RHODES

miles in length, and from twenty to twenty-five in width. A range of mountains runs through the island in the direction of its greatest length; the highest point in this range is between four and five thousand feet high. These mountains were formerly covered with pine forests, the timber from which was used for ship-building, and brought great wealth to the inhabitants of the island. Parts of these forests still remain, and are yet employed for the same purpose.

There are about forty villages scattered over the island, the largest of which has nearly eight hundred inhabitants; the population of the entire island is about thirty-five thousand. The largest portion of the inhabitants are Greeks; the rest are Turks and Jews. The soil of the island is very fertile, and the climate pleasanter than that of any other island in the Mediterranean. The city of Rhodes is beautifully situated on the side of a hill, and more than half the population of the island is found in this city.

The History of Rhodes.—This runs back to a very early period. Its name comes from the Greek word for rose; it was so called because it was supposed to be among islands what the rose is among flowers—the most beautiful of them all. In the early years of its history there were three large cities on this island, of which Rhodes was the chief; these cities were under one government, which was a sort of republic. The people of the island used then to make voyages all over the Mediterranean Sea. They also made settlements, which led to a great deal of trade and commerce. In consequence of all this trade, the people of the island grew very rich, and the city of Rhodes became famous for its splendid buildings, its paintings, and statuary. A celebrated writer and traveller, who lived a

few years before our Saviour was born, made a visit to this city after he had been to Alexandria and Rome, and says that Rhodes was a finer city than either of these two, which were so famous.

In later ages, since our Saviour's time, the island of Rhodes was celebrated as being the home of a class of men who were called "The Knights of St. John." They were famous as soldiers, and took part with the Crusaders, who fought so hard to recover the city of Jerusalem from the power and dominion of the Turks. The island now belongs to the Turkish government, and very little of its former wealth and power remain to it.

But, after all, the thing for which Rhodes was the most famous, and which most people first think of when they hear about this island, is *its great statue*. This is what our engraving is intended to represent; it is always spoken of as "*The Colossus of Rhodes*." Our word colossus comes from a Greek word which was used to denote a statue which is larger than the natural size of the person represented. Statues of this large size were very common in Egypt, and in other Eastern countries; but this Colossus of Rhodes was the most famous of them all.

It was about three hundred years before the birth of Christ when this celebrated statue was erected. The city of Rhodes had been besieged by a Grecian king; after a long struggle, the people of Rhodes succeeded in defeating and driving him away, and to show their gratitude to their god Apollo, by whose help they believed their city had been defended, they raised this statue to his honour. It took them twelve years to make it. It had to be cast in separate pieces, which were then fastened together, for the ancients never attempted to cast anything as large as this in one piece; and, indeed, it would have been very difficult

either to cast or to handle it in one piece, as it was seventy cubits (or a hundred and five feet) in height. It cost three hundred talents, which was between seventy and eighty thousand pounds of our money. It is said that the amount of money first set apart for erecting the statue was all used up before it was half finished, and that the artist first employed was so discouraged that he killed himself, and the statue was finished by another artist. It is said to have been built on solid stone piers at the entrance of the harbour, where it stood as if to guard the city; and its size was so great, that the largest vessels of those days could easily sail under it. No trace of this great wonder now remains, and many regard the whole story as only one of the myths of an early age.

It was not only erected in honour of the god Apollo, but was intended to represent him. Apollo was famous as an archer, and so in the picture he is seen with a bow in his left hand. He was also said to be famous for his musical power, and so he is represented as having hung at his back a musical instrument called a lyre, of which the ancients were very fond.

It is said that the statue was hollow, with a winding staircase up the inside of it, by which persons could mount up to the head of the figure, and, by looking through its eyes, could get a fine view of the neighbouring islands, of the coast of Asia Minor, and of the ships that were sailing over the dark blue waters of the Mediterranean.

This famous statue stood in its place for more than fifty years; then it was thrown down by an earthquake. It was allowed to lie upon the ground for hundreds of years, when it was sold to a Jew, who had it removed to Alexandria. The brass of which it was composed is said to have weighed seven hundred and twenty thousand pounds, and



THE COLOSSUS OF RHODES.

to have made a load for nine hundred camels. How truly work of this kind may be called "labour that satisfieth not!" And how much more honourable and profitable, too, is any work done for Jesus!

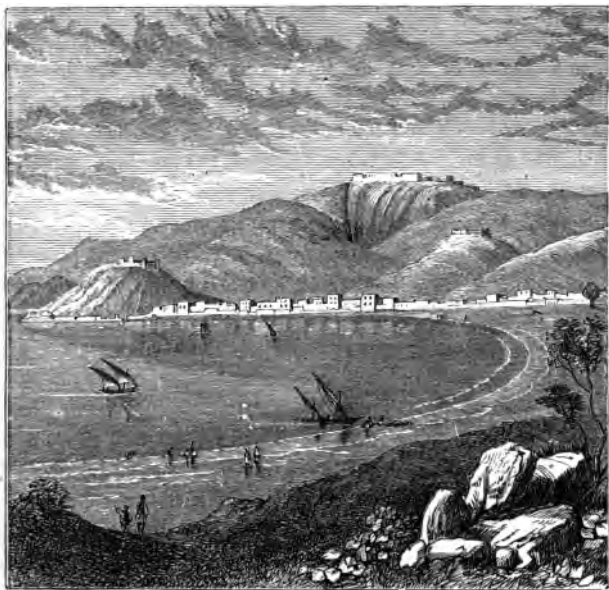
FROM RHODES TO SMYRNA.—Our steamer did not tarry long at this interesting island, and the signal to hasten on board again was given sooner than we cared to hear it. But, however reluctant, we were obliged to heed it, and cut short our stay on shore. As soon as we reached the steamer, she weighed anchor and proceeded on her course. Our sail continued through the Ægean Sea, among the beautiful islands that dot its surface; the wind was blowing fresh, but the sea is so land-locked with the numerous islands that there was but little motion.

ST. PAUL'S JOURNEY.—We were reminded of the great apostle's voyage described in the 20th and 21st chapters of the Acts of the Apostles. He was journeying in the opposite direction from our course—coming from the other end of this sea; he was on his way to Syria, which we had just left. But the different islands at which he stopped—Mitylene, Chios, Samos, Cos, and Rhodes—all lay in our course, only we were passing them in an order the reverse of that which is mentioned by Luke. There was something inspiring in the thought of being so intimately associated with the scene of the earnest labours of that godlike man.

THE ISLAND OF PATMOS.—It was a beautiful afternoon in the month of May when we sailed by this famous island. I walked up and down the deck of our steamer, and gazed with great interest on the dark, rocky outline of this island, and thought about the strange things that have been done and the wonderful things seen and heard here in times past. In speaking about it, there are three

things to which I wish to call attention. The first thing is

A Description of Patmos.—It lies in that part of the Mediterranean known as the *Ægean Sea*; its distance from the mainland, or Asia Minor, is about twenty miles; it is about twenty miles in extent; it is a barren, rocky



PATMOS.

island; the coast is rugged and steep in most places, with a number of sandy coves among the rocks; we have a good view of the principal one in our picture. Here is a pretty good harbour for trading vessels, and the chief town of the island is on this bay. The population of the island is only about four thousand people; they are nearly all Greeks,

although the government of the island is in the hands of the Turks.

The external aspect of the island as viewed from the sea, and the associations connected with it, are thus described by the deputation of the Free Church of Scotland which visited the place some years since:—"We saw the peaks of its two prominent hills, though our course did not lie very near. Still it was intensely interesting to get even a glance of that memorable spot where the beloved disciple saw the visions of God; the spot, too, where the Saviour was seen and his voice heard for the last time till he comes again. John's eye often rested on the mountains and the islands among which we were passing, and on the shores and waves of this great sea; and often, after the vision had passed, these natural features of his place of exile would refresh his spirit, reminding him how he had 'stood on the sand of the sea,' and how he had seen that 'every island fled away and the mountains were not found.'"

The inhabitants support themselves chiefly by farming; and as the land on the island is so barren, they go over to Asia Minor in the summer time, and carry on various farming operations there. The next thing to speak of is

The use of Patmos by the Romans.—They made it a prison, or a place of banishment. England had such a place in Australia, on the other side of the globe. The place which these prisoners occupied is called Botany Bay. Well, the island of Patmos was used by the Roman emperors as a sort of Botany Bay; they made choice of this island for the purpose named, because it was such a barren, rocky, desolate-looking place. We are not told how many people were sent there at a time, or how they were treated, or what they were required to do. If we

had a list of the names of all the persons ever banished to this island, with an account of their offences and of how they lived while here, how interesting it would be ! But we have no such list. Yet we do know a good deal about one very distinguished person who was sent here ; we always think of him when we read of this island. And so the third thing we have to speak about is

John the Evangelist in Patmos.—He was sent here as a prisoner by Domitian, the Roman emperor. But though condemned to this punishment, he was guilty of no crime. His own account of it is thus given : “ I, John,.....was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ ” (Rev. i. 9). His only offence was *preaching the gospel*. This is one of the most useful and blessed things anybody can ever do, and yet how many persons have had to suffer banishment, imprisonment, torture, and death for this very thing !

But John had a blessed time while he was in Patmos. One of good John Newton’s hymns says that

“ Prisons would palaces prove,
If Jesus would dwell with us there.”

John the Evangelist found this true. The last book of the Bible was written on this island. All the wonderful visions described in that book were seen by John while he was a prisoner here. The Roman emperor would not let John preach about Jesus, but he could not prevent Jesus from coming and speaking to him in Patmos.

On a hill at the southern part of the island, and commanding an extensive view, is the celebrated monastery which bears the name of “ John the Divine.” Halfway up the ascent is the grotto where tradition says the visions were revealed to the apostle, and which is still called “ *The*

Cave of the Revelation." On this lonely spot lived "the disciple whom Jesus loved." From his desolate abode his eye could range over much of the surrounding mainland of Asia, the chief field of Paul's spiritual labours, and the sites of the then populous cities where the seven churches were planted. Some of these, indeed, as Smyrna, Pergamos, and Laodicea, were planted by John himself.

The Roman emperor could confine the body of the apostle to one spot, but he could not confine his spirit. We are reminded here of the sweet-spirited Cowper's lines, when, speaking of the Christian, he says :—

"The oppressor holds his body bound,
But knows not what a range his spirit takes,
Unconscious of a chain ; and that to bind him
Is a vain attempt, whom God delights in,
Or in whom he dwells."

The Roman tyrant could prevent the apostle from visiting any other portion of this world save the barren rock on which he was imprisoned ; but he could not prevent the portals of the unseen world from opening before him, and unfolding all its glories to his enraptured vision. In his silent solitude he might be condemned to hear no earthly sound but that of the restless surge as it broke on the rocks, or the cry of the wild sea-bird as it whirled in ceaseless circles round his dwelling ; but no earthly mandate could forbid that his ear should be filled with the hosannas of the angels and the song of Moses and the Lamb, or that it should listen to that "great multitude" which were heard "as the voice of many waters, and the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Hallelujah ! for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth."

Imperial Cæsar had power to say to John, "Thou shalt never look again upon the city of the Great King, the

scene of thy Saviour's sufferings, so dear to thine heart;" but when there came to him "one of the seven angels, and talked with him, saying, Come hither, and I will show thee the bride, the Lamb's wife," imperial Cæsar had no power to interfere; and so, from his prison on that desolate island, the angel "carried him away in spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed him that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God: and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal; and the street of that city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass. And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof." Who would not gladly be banished to John's prison at Patmos, if he might but see such visions as he saw?

I gazed with delight on this interesting island till, with the lengthening distance, it gradually faded from our view. Then we swept swiftly along between Samos, the birthplace of Pythagoras, and Scio, the Chios of Homer, both of them presenting a beautiful aspect of fertility in their plains, which extend down to the edge of the sea, and calling to mind shadowy dreams of classical and scriptural associations. The whole scene was one of surpassing loveliness, and the sea was one sheet of placid water. The day closed with a sunset of exquisite beauty, abounding in those rich, soft hues that always characterize the landscapes of Claude Lorraine.

Our sail continued through the night, and on rising early the next morning we found ourselves making good progress up the beautiful bay of Smyrna, with the city in full view. For a description of this city and an account of our sojourn there, I must refer to the next chapter.

CHAPTER XVII.

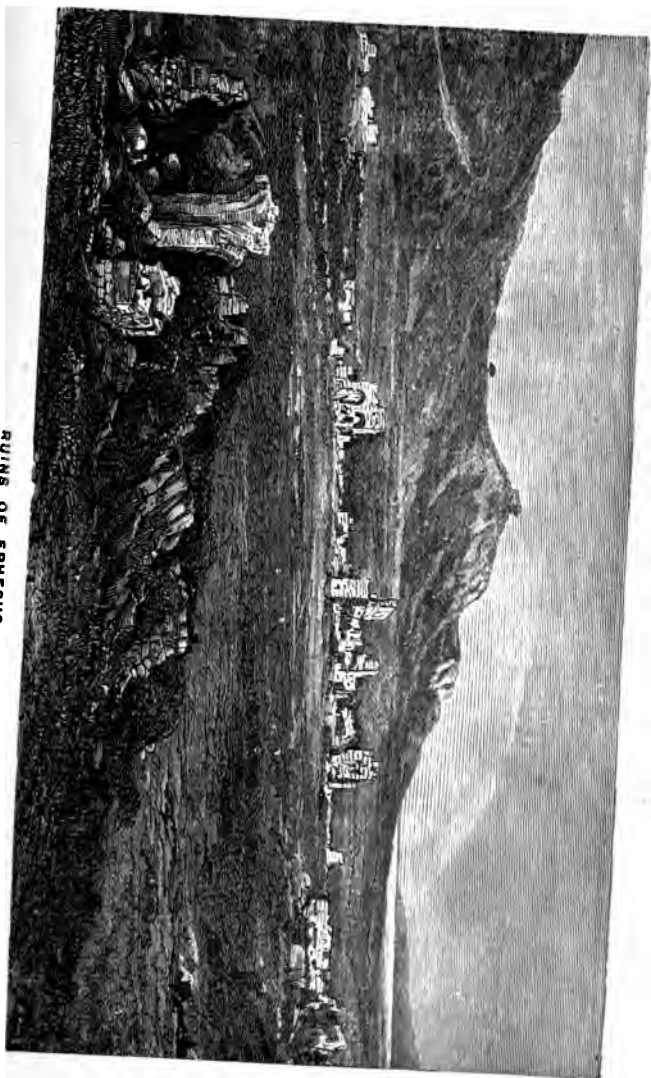
THE SEVEN CHURCHES OF ASIA MINOR—EPHESUS—SMYRNA—PERGAMOS
—THYATIRA—SARDIS—PHILADELPHIA—LAODICEA.



OUR rambles only led us to the scene of one of these famous churches; of that we can speak from personal observation. But though we did not visit the places in which the rest of these churches were located, yet having been in the neighbourhood of them, and having occasion to speak of one of the places, it seemed better to speak of the others also. This, accordingly, we have done. The engravings represent the localities of those churches as they now appear, and in connection therewith is a sketch of the history of each, with a glance at the epistles addressed to them severally. We begin, then, with

EPHESUS.—Our engraving on the opposite page represents the ruins of the celebrated city of Ephesus. This was situated about forty miles from Smyrna. It was a very large and splendid city at the time when our Saviour was on earth. The soil around it is fertile, and the climate very mild and pleasant. There are several things for which Ephesus must always be an interesting place to those who study the Bible. One thing that interests us in this place is

The Great Temple of Ephesus.—This was a very large and gorgeous building; it was erected to the honour of the goddess Diana. This temple was 425 feet in length,



RUINS OF EPHESUS

and 220 in breadth; it had one hundred and twenty-seven marble columns, each of which was 60 feet in height, and which were given by so many different kings. All the provinces of Asia Minor contributed to the expenses of this temple, and it took two hundred years to finish the building of it. This splendid temple was set on fire by a man named Herostratus. He thought this would be a sure way of making his name known through all coming time; in this he was successful, for every one who reads about the city of Ephesus knows who it was that destroyed that wonderful building. Nothing was left of it but the walls and some of the columns. It was afterwards rebuilt in the same grandeur as before. It was this second temple which was standing in the times of the New Testament, and for a long time it was regarded as one of the wonders of the world. But at last it went to decay; some of the splendid columns belonging to it were taken to Constantinople, and used to adorn the great Church of St. Sophia. That church is now a Turkish mosque, but those old columns are in it still. In Ephesus the place where that grand temple stood cannot now be told.

Another thing that interests us in this city is

The Apostle Paul's Connection with Ephesus.—He introduced the gospel here, and founded the first Christian church in this city. Paul remained longer here than he was accustomed to do in any one place. It was a place to which people came from all parts of the world. This gave him fine opportunities for preaching the gospel. Every day, for two years at a time, he went on preaching here and arguing about the gospel, both with the Jews and with the heathen. His preaching produced very great effects, as we read in the nineteenth chapter of the Acts. So many people were converted and gave up worshipping the goddess

Diana, that the silversmiths, who got their living by making images of this idol, began to be afraid that their trade would be ruined; so they got up a riot in the city, with the hope of driving Paul, the great preacher of the new religion, away. But they failed in this; and though the apostle went away of his own accord not long after, yet the work went on, and "the word of God mightily grew and prevailed" in Ephesus.

Afterwards, when Paul was a prisoner in the city of Rome, he wrote from the prison in which he was confined an epistle or letter to the Christians at Ephesus. This Epistle to the Ephesians is one of the most interesting and instructive of all his epistles.

But there is another thing that makes this city interesting to us, and that is

The Apostle John's Connection with Ephesus.—This "disciple whom Jesus loved," and who was the gentlest and most loving of all the apostles, is said to have lived at Ephesus, both before he was banished to the island of Patmos and after his release from that banishment. It was in his home here that the mother of Jesus is said to have lived with him. You remember that Jesus committed his mother to the care of the apostle John, while he was hanging on the cross (John xix. 25-27). The tradition is that she lived with John at Ephesus for fifteen years after the death of Jesus, and that she was buried in this city.

While John was a prisoner on the island of Patmos, he wrote, at the command of Jesus, an epistle to each of the seven churches of Asia Minor. The first of these epistles was written "to the angel," or minister, of the church at Ephesus. We have this epistle in Revelation ii. 1-7. There is only one thing in this epistle to which I wish to call your attention. Look at the fifth verse. Here Jesus threatens

to "remove the candlestick" of this church "out of its place, unless they repented." To remove the candlestick of a church out of its place is the same as saying that the light of the gospel which that church has had should be taken away from it, or that the church should die out. And this threatening has been fulfilled to the church at Ephesus. For long years past not one Christian has lived in the place where this great city, and the church founded by the apostle Paul, once flourished. You can see from our picture what a desolate place Ephesus now is. Those who go there find nothing but ruins.

When the apostle John was released from Patmos, he came back to Ephesus, and spent the rest of his life there. It is said that he was the only one of the apostles who did not suffer martyrdom, but died a natural death. He lived to be very old; and when he was no longer able to preach, we are told that he used to be carried into the church, where he would stand with his silver locks flowing over his shoulders, and stretching out his hands, would say, "Little children, love one another!"

SMYRNA.—In approaching this city, its position and surroundings impart to it an appearance of great beauty. This, however, is only the "enchantment which distance lends to the view." It is entirely dispelled by a nearer approach to the place. The streets are found to be so narrow, crowded, and filthy, that you cease to wonder at the prevalence here of the cholera, the yellow fever, the plague, and other forms of disease so dreadful and fatal. We stopped at the "Hotel des Deux Augusta," which was recommended to us as the best in the place; but we found the accommodation very poor; the rooms were small, dark, and dirty, and swarming with mosquitoes. The first night, before going to bed, I killed *fifty* in my room, and

the second night nearly *seventy*. I was obliged to do some writing by candle-light, and could only accomplish it by sitting with a handkerchief round my head and gloves on my hands. But, in spite of these drawbacks, Smyrna is a very interesting place to visit; it is so for several reasons. In the first place, it is interesting for

Its Position and History.—Notwithstanding what we have said of it, Smyrna is one of the finest and most



SMYRNA.

flourishing cities of the Levant. It is the lovely crown of the district of Ionia, to which it belongs; and instead of decaying in modern times, like most of the cities of the East, this bright ornament of Asia Minor has risen from her ruins with new splendour. The population is variously estimated at 130,000 to 150,000 people; nearly one-third of these are Christians and Jews, and the rest Mohammedans. It is pleasantly situated on the sloping sides of

Mount Pagus, whose extended ridges embrace the locality, helping to defend and adorn it, and at the same time to supply its buildings with a profusion of the purest white marble.

The present city of Smyrna dates back to the time of Alexander the Great. In earlier times there had been a city here, which had been destroyed and left in ruins for four hundred years. But the Macedonian conqueror, while pushing onward in his victorious career, is said to have had visions in which he was commanded to found a city in this locality. In obedience to that vision Smyrna was founded, and has continued, through various changes, to the present day. The unusual prosperity of the city may well occasion surprise, especially in view of the unhealthiness of its situation and its exposure to earthquakes. These are of frequent occurrence, and they are often of a most serious character; in 1814 not less than 40,000 of the inhabitants were destroyed by one of these awful visitations.

We made an excursion one afternoon during our stay here to the summit of Mount Pagus, which lies back of the town, for the twofold purpose of enjoying the view it affords of the city and its surroundings, and also of inspecting the extensive ruins of a fine old castle that stands there. From the walls of this castle we could look directly down upon the city, and at the same time had a charming view of the splendid bay at the head of which Smyrna is situated, with the shipping lying at anchor before the city, and of the beautiful panorama of mountains encircling the bay on every side. The castle, whose ruins still remain, belongs to a period some seven or eight centuries back; it figured largely in the events of those days, though the details of its history are buried in oblivion.

The Classical Associations of Smyrna.—This is the second thing that invests this old city with peculiar interest. Smyrna claims the honour of having given birth to Homer. Of this there can be little doubt, as Homer himself states that he was born on the banks of the Meles, a small stream which flows in a northerly direction along the eastern limits of the city ; in summer time it dwindles to an insignificant brook, but in winter it is said to be a river with a full and foaming volume of water. On the banks of this classic stream, and far up towards its source, a cave is shown which is said to have been the solitary retreat in which the sublime old poet was accustomed to compose his verses. This is the only memorial of Homer pointed out here. But in the vicinity of this town are shown the tomb of Tantalus, as well as the place of his abode. Here, also, tradition locates Diana's bath, whence Actæon's hounds pursued and tore the hands that caressed them.

On the castle hill, of which I have spoken above, are some remains of ancient Smyrna. Portions of the old Hellenic walls are still visible in the ruins of the castle, which occupies the site of the Acropolis on the summit of Mount Pagus. Within the circuit are some relics of the Temple of Jupiter. The stadium of the ancient theatre is formed on one side by an excavation in the hill. The seats and ornaments have been removed, but the form of it may be distinctly traced. To the classical student these are points of great interest. But to the Christian traveller everything else in Smyrna is lost sight of in comparison with

Its Connection with Scripture.—Asia Minor is as rich in its scriptural associations almost as Palestine itself. The history of the Acts of the Apostles has made well-nigh

every spot here classic ground to the Bible student. It is all linked in with New Testament memories. Here an apostle was born, there he taught, and yonder he suffered; on the face of that hill a martyr died, and amid the pensive beauty of that grove of cypress trees his body was interred. And spots so sacred as these may well excite feelings of enduring interest and solemn delight.

Smyrna was the seat of one of the seven churches of Asia Minor to which the celebrated epistles of the book of the Revelation of St. John were addressed. It was also the scene of the martyrdom of the venerable Polycarp, who was the pupil of the apostle John, and is supposed to have been "the angel" to whom was addressed "the epistle to the church of Smyrna." The spot is pointed out, near the stadium, where tradition says this eminent servant of God sealed his testimony to the truth of the gospel with his blood.

If we look at the epistles to the seven churches, we shall see that three of the churches—Ephesus, Sardis, and Laodicea—are more severely threatened than the other four. These—namely, Smyrna, Pergamos, Thyatira, and Philadelphia—are partly commended, and only very mildly menaced; and it is a point of great interest to know, as a simple resulting fact, that these four are populous cities still, and contain communities of at least nominal Christians, while the others are empty and waste.

But let us especially look at the epistle to the church of Smyrna in connection with its subsequent history and present condition.

We find the epistle to this church in Revelation ii. 8-10: "To the angel of the church in Smyrna write; These things saith the first and the last, which was dead, and is alive; I know thy works, and tribulation, and poverty

(but thou art rich), and I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan. Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer : behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried ; and ye shall have tribulation ten days : be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."

The church of Smyrna is here pronounced by Christ, the author of these epistles, as rich, and no judgment is pronounced against it. The members of that church are warned of a tribulation of ten days—the ten years' persecution of Diocletian. They are enjoined to "be faithful unto death," and have the promise that they shall "receive a crown of life." And according to the prediction of this epistle, Smyrna is still, as we have seen, a large and flourishing city. It has several Greek churches, and an English and other Christian ministers reside there. The light has indeed become dim, but the candlestick has not been wholly removed out of its place, because prophecy has not so predicted. On the contrary, in spite of awful and oft-repeated calamities from plague and earthquake, the city continues rather to increase than to diminish. Great portions of the inhabitants have been destroyed several times in a moment ; and dreadful fires innumerable have destroyed whole streets at a time. The sea, driven in by internal convulsions, has swallowed up thousands at once ; and the plague has visited the city, till of late, at least twice every year. These causes would have destroyed any other city in the world ten times over. But Smyrna has been preserved, in the midst of these oft-recurring calamities, because God in his wisdom and might has willed it to be so. John saw it, and foretold it of old from Patmos.

Travellers have attempted to explain the secret of the

continued prosperity of Smyrna by telling of its spacious and secure harbour, of the luxuriant fertility of its soil, producing spontaneously every species of fruit of the finest quality, and of the salubrity of its climate. These they say have operated for two thousand years to collect and keep together the vast mass of its inhabitants from every quarter of the globe. But these same causes have been in operation in other parts of Asia Minor. Certainly if these were all that had to do with it, Ephesus, for instance, which is but forty miles distant from Smyrna, ought to have retained its prosperity too. But in the epistle to the church at Ephesus, the Head of the Church threatened to "*remove her candlestick out of its place.*"

And how different the history of Ephesus has been from that of Smyrna! Imagination can scarcely picture the change which has taken place there since these epistles were written. All around Ephesus is now a sea of ruins and desolation. A few unintelligible heaps of stones, with some empty mud cottages, are all that remain of the great city of Ephesus. The busy hum of its noisy population is as still as the grave. The Epistle to the Ephesians is read throughout the world, but there is not one Christian residing at Ephesus to read it now. But Smyrna, in its continued prosperity, remains, bearing eloquent testimony to the faithfulness with which God causes the predictions of his Word to be fulfilled.

PERGAMOS.—The *third* of the seven churches of Asia Minor to which the apostle John wrote his epistles or letters from the island of Patmos, was at a city called Pergamos. The engraving we have here gives us a view of the ruins of this place. It was about three days' journey from Smyrna, at the rate at which people were accustomed to travel in the days in which the Bible was written. This

city was situated on the banks of a river named Caicus, and was about twelve miles from the sea. The name of the place has been changed from Pergamos to Bergama. The epistle which was sent to the church in this place we find written in Revelation ii. 12-17.

There are *three* things about the church at Pergamos of which I wish to speak.



RUINS AT PERGAMOS.

The *first* thing is, *that it was a church in a very rich place.* Two things about this city show us how rich it was. One of these is the splendour of its ruins. The city still has a population of from twelve to fifteen thousand. But all around it, in every direction, are vast quantities of blocks and columns and broken pillars of white marble. Some of these columns are thirty and forty feet in length. In some places they are buried in the earth, and in others

they lie scattered over the surface of it. But there are no marble quarries near the city. This material must all have been brought from a great distance. These marble ruins are so great that for hundreds of years the Turks have used them for quarries. They break up these marbles for building stones, and burn them for lime. And so the greatness of these ruins shows us how rich a place Pergamos must once have been.

Another thing which showed this was *the very valuable library* that was formed here. Before the time of our Saviour, there was a very wise and wealthy king named Eumenes, who lived here. He spent a vast amount of money upon this library. Of course they had no printed books in those days. There were none but written books then. These were called *manuscripts*. This means *written by hand*. Of these written books it is said there were two hundred thousand volumes in this library at Pergamos.

It is singular enough that our word "*parchment*" came from this place, and the library of which we are speaking. In those days the leaves of the papyrus plant, in Egypt, were used instead of paper. In making up his great library, this king found it impossible to get as many of the papyrus leaves as he needed. He then had manufactories established at Pergamos for the preparation of sheep-skins and the skins of other animals, for the purpose of writing on them. These were soon found to be whiter and smoother and more durable than the papyrus leaves. They were at first called "*Pergamos Paper*;" but, for shortness and convenience' sake, they were afterwards called *parchment*—the name we still apply to them.

But then, *secondly*, Pergamos was also a very wicked place. There is one thing in verse 13 that shows how wicked this place was; there it is said that "*Satan's seat*"

was at Pergamos. Where fire is, we expect it to be warm; where the sun is, we expect it to be light; where ice is, we expect it to be cold; and where Satan is, and especially where he dwells and rules, we may well expect to find wickedness prevailing in an unusual degree. And this was the case at Pergamos. Wherever Satan is, we may be sure he will be stirring up men to all sorts of wickedness.

In the 14th verse we are told how he did this. He taught the people "*the doctrine of Balaam.*" This was a wicked prophet about whom we read in Numbers, chapters xxii., xxiii., and xxiv. He tempted the children of Israel to worship the idols of the Moabites, to eat the meat that had been offered to these idols, and to do many other very wicked things. This made God angry with them. He sent a plague among them, by which thousands of the people were killed. Balaam also was killed in battle as a punishment for his wickedness. And Satan, who tempted Balaam to all these wrong things, tempted the people at Pergamos to do the same sort of things. And this made it a *wicked place*.

But then, *it was also a very faithful place*. I mean by this that there were some very faithful people there. Jesus says (verse 13) that the members of this church had been faithful, amidst all the wickedness about them, in not denying his name. And he speaks of his martyr Antipas, who had showed his faithfulness by being willing to die rather than give up his religion. We know nothing more about this good man than what is mentioned of him here. But this shows us how earnest and faithful the members of the church at Pergamos were.

And because they were so faithful, Jesus gave them a very precious promise in verse 17. He said they should eat

of the "*hidden manna*." This refers to the happiness and joy he would give them, both while they were serving him in this world and when he took them to live with him in heaven. He also promised to give them "a white stone, with a new name," which nobody should know about but those who received it. This may have a good many meanings, which there is not time for us to speak of now. But there is one thing that it certainly means. In former times kings were accustomed to give to those whom they especially loved a jewel with some word engraved upon it, as a mark of particular favour. And so Jesus will give to his faithful people some special token of his loving kindness. Let us try to serve him truly, and then he will fill our hearts with joy and give us all the good things he has promised to his people.

THYATIRA.—Here we have a view of Thyatira. It was to the church in this place that the apostle John wrote from the island of Patmos the *fourth* of the epistles or letters which the Lord Jesus Christ sent to the seven churches in Asia Minor. These were not John's letters, but the letters of Jesus. John was only the scribe or writer of them. He held the pen for Jesus, and wrote down just what *he* told him. All the thoughts and words in these letters are the thoughts and words of Jesus. If I take my pen and sit down to write, and you sit down by me and tell me what to write, then you would be *dictating* to me, or telling me what to write. When these letters were written, Jesus was dictating and John was writing.

Thyatira was a flourishing city of Asia Minor at the time when these epistles were written. A great Roman road ran through this country, and these cities were situated on this road in the order in which they are men-

tioned in the book of Revelation. Thyatira was about two days' journey from Pergamos, according to the slow rate of travelling in those days. There is not so much to interest us in the history of this place as in the case of most of the other cities to which these seven epistles were written. The modern name by which this city is known is Ak-Hissar, which means "the white castle."



THYATIRA.

We find the epistle to "the angel of the church at Thyatira" in Revelation ii. 18-29.

There are *four* things to speak about here. These are: *the lesson, the threat, the duty, the promise*, in this epistle. Let us look a moment, in the *first* place, at

The Lesson taught.—This lesson is about the character of Jesus. In verse 18 he is spoken of as "the Son of God, who hath *his eyes like unto a flame of fire*." Here we are

taught two things about Jesus. *We see how easily he can find out our sins.* When a flame of fire is kindled in any place, no matter how dark that place was before, it will be light enough now. Nothing in it could be seen before, but now everything there can be seen in a moment. And so it is with our lives and our hearts. When Jesus looks at them with "his eyes like a flame of fire," it is just as if a sunbeam were turned on them. Nothing can be hid from him. He sees everything that we have done. He knows all that we have said or thought or felt. Let us remember these "eyes like a flame of fire" that Jesus has, and let us not try to hide anything from him.

And then this lesson shows us *how easily Jesus can punish us for our sins*, as well as find them out. A flame of fire has power not only to give light and show things, but also *to burn them up.* And so when we think of those flaming eyes of Jesus, it should lead us to remember what power he has to punish us if we do not repent of our sins and try to serve him.

The *second* thing to speak about in this epistle is

The Threat uttered.—This we read of in verses 20-24. I cannot attempt to explain all this. But it is enough to know that there was a wicked woman named "Jezebel" living at Thyatira, and connected with the church. She was teaching the people to do very wicked things. And here Jesus threatens to "kill her and her children with death," unless they repented and left off their wicked ways. To "kill with death" means not only that they should die, but that they should die by some sudden and violent death, as by plague or famine or sword. It would be very interesting if we knew what the effect of this threatening was: whether they repented or not; and if not, in what way the threat was fulfilled. But we may be very sure

that the threat was fulfilled if they did not repent. We know how sure God's promises are. But all his threatenings are just as sure as his promises.

The *third* thing to notice in this epistle is

The Duty urged.—This is spoken of in verse 25, where Jesus says, "*But that which ye have already, hold fast till I come.*" This means that they should remember all the truth they had been taught about Jesus as their Saviour. It is the same duty that the apostle Paul urges on the Hebrew Christians, when he says, "Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things that we have heard, *lest at any time we let them slip*" (Heb. ii. 1). You know how it is when water is poured into a leaky bucket; it runs out quickly, and very soon it is all gone. When we have bad memories, our minds are like such a leaky vessel; the things that we are taught run away from us, as water runs through a sieve. And so this lesson about "holding fast," and "not letting slip the things that we have heard," is a very important one for us. Let us remember it when we are in church or in Sunday-school, and let us try to "hold fast that which we have already." Let our prayer be—in the words of the hymn—

"O write upon our memories, Lord,
The texts and doctrines of thy word,
That we may break thy laws no more,
But love thee better than before."

The *last* thing to speak about in this epistle is

The Promise given.—This is spoken of in verses 26–28. One thing that Jesus promises to his faithful people here is "power over the nations." It is not very easy to tell exactly what is meant by this. It refers, no doubt, to some position of honour that Jesus will give to his people in that glorious kingdom for which we are taught to pray,

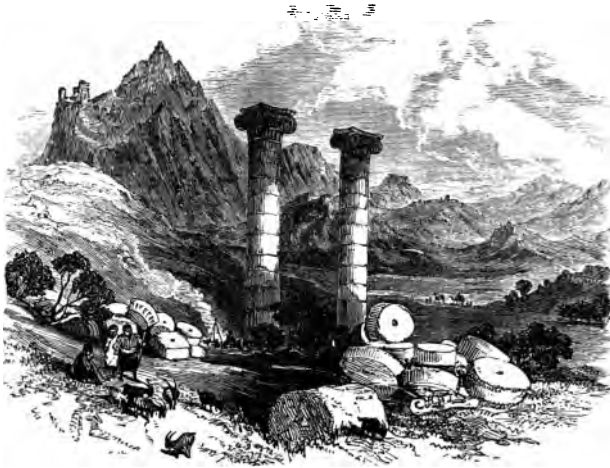
when we say, "Thy kingdom come." But though we may not understand its meaning now, if we only love and serve Jesus, we shall know all about it by-and-by.

But there is another part of this promise which is not so hard to understand. In the 28th verse Jesus says, "*I will give him the morning star.*" You know what a beautiful thing the morning star is. Jesus says of himself, "*I am the bright and morning star.*" And if he is "the morning star," then when he promises to give the morning star to his people, it means that he will give himself to them. And this is a blessed promise. For Jesus has all riches and wisdom and power in himself. And if he gives us himself, he must give us all these things. You remember, in the account we have of the transfiguration of our Saviour, how wonderful the beauty and glory of his appearance was. His raiment was white as snow, and his face was brighter than the sun. Well, that is the way in which Jesus will appear when he comes into our world again. And then the apostle Paul tells us that "*we shall be like him*, for we shall see him as he is." He will be as glorious and beautiful as the morning star, and all who love him will share that beauty and that glory. And then the words of Jesus will be fulfilled, in which he promises to all his conquering people that he "will give them the morning star." This is a blessed promise. May it be fulfilled in our experience!

SARDIS.—The *fifth* of the epistles which John wrote from Patmos to the churches of Asia Minor was sent to the church of Sardis. The engraving here given represents the place as it now appears to those who visit it. A few poor huts, some ruins scattered around, and two beautiful columns, as seen in the engraving (supposed to be the remains of one of the oldest temples in the world), are all

that can at present be found here. The name which the place now bears is Sart.

Sardis was a very ancient city ; it stood in the midst of a beautiful, fertile plain. Out of this plain rose a high mountain, called Mount Tmolus, and through the plain flowed the river Pactolus, which was famous in old times



SARDIS.

for the golden sands along its banks, out of which great quantities of that precious metal were obtained.

Before speaking of the epistle to the church at Sardis, there is an interesting story connected with this city which may well be told here ; it is

The Story of Cræsus.—He was one of the most famous of the Lydian kings. Sardis was the capital of his kingdom ; it was then in the height of its glory. Cræsus had been successful in his wars, and was considered the

wealthiest king in the world at that time; he had so much money, that it has become a proverb from that day to this, when speaking of any one very well off, to say that "he is as rich as Cræsus." In view of his great wealth and power, he considered himself one of the most favoured of men. A great many wise and learned men lived at Sardis then; among them was Solon, who was looked upon as the wisest man living. One day Cræsus asked Solon who was the happiest man he knew. He supposed, of course, he would tell him that he was. Instead of this, Solon mentioned several other persons, but said nothing about the king. Cræsus then asked if he did not consider *him* very happy. Solon said great persons, like Cræsus, were liable to meet with so many changes, that it was not right to call them happy till they died.

Some years after this, the celebrated Cyrus came that way with a great army; he conquered Cræsus in battle, captured his city, made him a prisoner, took away his riches from him, and ordered him to be burned to death. A great pile of wood was prepared. Cræsus was bound and stretched on the pile. As he lay there waiting for the fire to kindle, he thought of what Solon had said. This led him to cry out, "O Solon, Solon, Solon!" On hearing this, Cyrus felt curious to know what it meant; he ordered him to be unbound and brought before him. Then he asked what he meant by calling on Solon. Cræsus told him what Solon had said about the changes to which kings are liable. This story so touched the heart of Cyrus, that he saved the life of Cræsus, restored to him his city, and became his friend.

The Epistle to the Church of Sardis.—We find this epistle in Revelation iii. 1-6. There are *three* things which are most important to notice in this epistle. The *first* of these is

The State of the Church.—In verse 1 Jesus says, “*Thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead.*” And in verse 2 he speaks of “*things that are ready to die*” in this church. He says, also, that he “*has not found her works perfect before God.*”

Some of the other churches were found fault with for false doctrines which they held, or wrong things which they did; but it was not so with the church at Sardis. This church was like a sick man who has not life enough left to do anything; it was like a candle, the flame of which was flickering before it went out. The members of this church were losing their love for Jesus and their interest in his cause. They were folding their hands and sitting down in idleness, when there was so much to be done. The church in Sardis was a cold church, a feeble church, a sick church, almost a dead church. This was its state.

The *second* thing to notice about this church is

The Directions given to it.—Four things are pointed out for them to do in verses 2 and 3. They were to “*remember*” all that had been done for them; they were to “*hold fast*” and “*strengthen*” what little good was left in them; they were to “*repent*” of having allowed themselves to get so cold and dead; and they were to “*watch*” against the danger they were in of losing the little grace that was left to them. Jesus would have them do with the little religion they had what we do with a fire on the hearth when it has almost gone out; we rake together the live coals or sparks that remain, and gently blow them or fan them till they kindle into a flame that will begin to burn again with new life. This is the meaning of the directions here given to the church at Sardis.

In the opening of the epistle, Jesus points out to them how they may do this. He says, in verse 1, “*I am he that*

hath the seven spirits of God." "*The seven spirits of God*" means the Holy Spirit. Jesus wished to remind the members of this church that they could not do the things they are here told to do in their own strength, that they needed the help of the Holy Spirit to enable them to do these; and that he had this Spirit, and was ready to give it to his people when they prayed to him for it. This is very important for us to remember. We need the help of the Holy Spirit in reading and studying the Bible, and in all our efforts either to get good for ourselves or to do good to others.

The *third* thing to notice in this epistle to the church at Sardis is

The Promise held out to it.—This is one of those promises that the apostle Peter speaks of as "exceeding great and precious promises." We find this promise in verses 4 and 5; it takes in four blessed things which Jesus says he will give to all who follow his directions, who "*overcome*" their enemies and serve him faithfully. Here are the four things wrapped up in this promise: the first is, their names shall not be blotted out of the book of life. This means they shall have—as the hymn says—

"A title clear to mansions in the skies."

The second is, they shall "*be clothed in white raiment.*" This means that their sins shall all be washed away through the blood of Jesus, and they shall be made holy and fit for heaven. The third is, Jesus says, "*they shall walk with me in white.*" To walk with Jesus in the heavenly world, means that he will be our companion, that we will share his thoughts and feelings, his joys and glory. How wonderful this is! And then the last thing included in this promise is, that Jesus "*will confess our names before*

his Father and the holy angels." What a wonderful promise this is! If we only have a share in it, it will be better for us than if we were made the owners of all the gold and silver and gems and jewels in the world.



PHILADELPHIA.

PHILADELPHIA.—The Philadelphia represented in our picture is that to which the apostle John wrote the *sixth* of the seven letters or epistles which Jesus sent by him, while he was a prisoner in the island of Patmos, to the churches of Asia Minor

There are *two* things which I wish to speak of in connection with this subject: one is *the situation and history of this city*; the other is *the epistle that was sent to it*. I have something to say, in the *first* place, about

The Situation and History of Philadelphia.—It is situated about ninety miles from Sardis. It lies on the

edge of a fertile plain, with a range of rough and rugged mountains behind it. This range of mountains has been thrown up by a volcano, and has a very dark, barren look.

This city was built one hundred and forty years before the time of our Saviour, by one of the kings of Pergamos, whose name was Attalus Philadelphus. He did not live in it himself, or make it the capital of his kingdom, but built it for the purpose of trade, and called it after his own name. The word Philadelphia, you know, means *brotherly love*. William Penn, who founded Philadelphia in America, gave it this name to show the love and kindness with which he desired to treat the Indians.

The plain on which the ancient city of Philadelphia stood was very fertile. In old times the sugar-cane flourished there, and sugar was one of the principal articles of trade of the place; but in modern times this useful plant has disappeared, and in place of it the poppy plant is cultivated, out of which the poisonous drug called opium is made. At a certain season the women and children go out into the fields, and scratch the leaves of the plant with sharp-pointed skewers; then a milky sort of sap or juice comes out on the leaf; this dries in the sun, and turns into a dark-coloured kind of gum, which is gathered, washed in water, and then is fit for sale. The Turkish government at Constantinople claims all the opium that is raised here, and it is against the law for the people of the place to use it themselves. This is a blessed law for them, and if they mind it they must be saved from a great deal of misery; for there is nothing in the world that is doing so much harm to the bodies and the souls of men to-day as opium. We think the use of ardent spirits is very bad in our country, and so it is; but the use of opium is still worse.

In China and other Eastern countries, where it is freely used, it is ruining, both for this world and the next, thousands and thousands of people every year.

In the many changes that have taken place during the two thousand years of its history, the old Philadelphia has often been besieged and taken in war. But it has suffered oftener, and still more severely, from earthquakes. If you and I could visit this old city to-day, as we walked among the buildings which we see in our picture, we should find there broken arches and columns, which are the ruins of what Philadelphia once was. But after all its many changes, it still remains and still prospers.

But now, in the *second* place, let us look at

The Epistle to the Church in Philadelphia.—We read about this in Revelation iii. 7-13. In most of the other epistles Jesus finds fault with the members of the churches, and threatens them with punishments of different kinds unless they leave off their evil ways and do better. But in this letter to the church in Philadelphia there is no fault found and no threatening words spoken. He speaks of them only to praise them. In verse 8 he says, "*Thou hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name.*" Jesus had no words to speak to this church but words of encouragement and promise.

The promise which Jesus gives to this church is a very precious one. Part of it had reference to the present life, and part of it to the life to come. Let us look now at this

Promise for the Present Life.—We find this in verses 9 and 10. In verse 9, *Jesus tells them what he would do to their enemies.* There were wicked men living in this city, "who called themselves Jews, and were not, but were of the synagogue of Satan." This means that they were doing

Satan's work, by persecuting and annoying the followers of Jesus in that city. Jesus promises that he would cause these men to know that he loved the members of the church in Philadelphia, and make them come and worship him along with them. This means that he would convert these Jews and make them Christians; then they would no longer be the enemies of the Christian Church. And this promise was exactly fulfilled; for it is mentioned by a Christian writer at the beginning of the second century, only a little while after the death of the apostle John, who wrote this epistle, that a great many Jews in Philadelphia who had been persecutors of the church became Christians, and, like Paul, "preached the gospel which they had once destroyed."

But in his promise to the members of this church, Jesus tells them *what he would do for themselves*, as well as what he would do to their enemies. In verse 10, he promises to "*keep them from the hour of temptation* which should come upon all the world." We are told that "*the Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptation*" (2 Peter ii. 9). We remember how he delivered Lot from Sodom, and Joseph in Egypt, and Job in the land of Uz, and Daniel in Babylon. And if we only knew the history of the church in Philadelphia after this, we should find how completely this part of our Saviour's promise to that church was fulfilled. But

The Promise for the Life to Come is the best part of this promise. We find this in verse 12. It assured them of *three things* in heaven, and these were, *the security, the honour, and the happiness* of that blessed place.

The security of heaven is one thing embraced in this promise. This is what is meant when Jesus says, "Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my

God, and he shall go no more out." The idea of this is, that they would find themselves safe or secure in heaven, and that this security would be as fixed or permanent as a stone pillar in a temple is. Philadelphia was not a safe place to live in; it was very subject to earthquakes; these destroyed their houses and threw down the temples with their pillars. The people were often obliged to "*go out*" of their houses and temples, and seek for safety in the open fields. And to think of heaven as a temple in which they could dwell securely, and from which it would not be necessary for them to "*go out*" in order to find safety, would be very pleasant to them. Heaven is promised to them here as a *place of security*.

But *honour* is promised here in heaven, as well as security: "*I will write upon him the name of my God.*" When a Roman general had been successful in overcoming his enemies, on his return home the people often built a pillar or arch to his honour. On this pillar they would engrave the names of the cities he had taken, or the people he had conquered, or anything connected with him that would be the most to his honour. But in heaven the most honourable thing is to have it known that God loves us. And when Jesus promises to write upon his people the name of God, he means that he will make it known to all in heaven that God loves them very much. As he says in another place, he will "*confess them before his Father and the holy angels.*" This will be the highest honour of heaven.

And then the *happiness of heaven* is another part of this promise: "*And I will write upon him the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem.*" Here heaven is compared to a city called the "New Jerusalem." And when Jesus promises to write the name of this city on his people,

the meaning is, that he will give them a share in all the joys and blessings of that city. If we wish to know what these are, we must read the last two chapters of the book of Revelation. There we have the fullest description of this city that the Bible contains. *The security, the honour, the happiness* of heaven, how wonderful these will be! May God help us to "*overcome*" sin and Satan, that we may have a share in the promise given to "the church in Philadelphia."

LAODICEA.—We come now to speak of the place where the church was to which the *last* of the seven epistles was written. Our engraving represents that place as it appears to those who now visit it. I wish to speak about the *history of Laodicea*, and *what Jesus said in his letter to the church there*.

The History of Laodicea.—Ephesus and Smyrna, to which the first two letters were written by John, were in the western part of Asia Minor, near the sea. Laodicea, to which the last of his seven letters was written, was the farthest from them in an easterly direction. This city was in existence a long time before the date of this epistle. We do not know by whom it was founded. The Greeks first called it Diospolis, which means the city of Jupiter. Then for a while it went by the name of Rhoas; and at last one of the kings of Syria gave it the name applied to it in the New Testament, after the name of his wife, Laodice.

It was a great place for trade and commerce, and in this way it became very rich. At the time when this epistle was written, it was very prosperous. But this prosperity has long since passed away, and for hundreds of years past nothing has been left of Laodicea but its ruins. We see some of them in our picture. No one lives in Laodicea now. It is called by the Turks Eski-Hissar, which means

“the old castle.” Not very far from these ruins is a village called Denisli.

And now let us look at the epistle which was sent to the church at Laodicea. We find this in Revelation iii. 14–22. Read these verses over, and then notice *four* things in them. One of these is—

What Jesus thought of the Laodiceans.—This is told us



LAODICEA.

in verses 15, 16. He said that because “they were lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, he would spue them out of his mouth.” With some of the churches to which these epistles were sent, Jesus found fault because of the false doctrines which they held. With others of them he found fault because they allowed things to be done which were very wrong. But it was different with the members of the church at Laodicea. They did not feel interest enough in

the subject of religion to care anything about what they professed, or believed, or did. This was what Jesus thought of them. This was their real state. And it was very disagreeable to him. If you take anything that makes you sick at the stomach, and causes you to vomit, you know how disagreeable the feeling is to you. Jesus tells us here that this is just the way he feels towards lukewarm persons,—that is, to those who profess to love him, and yet show by their conduct that they care nothing about him. Let us pray for grace to love him with all our hearts, that he may not say of us what he says here about the Laodiceans.

In the next place let us see

What the Laodiceans thought of themselves.—We read about this in verse 17. They thought that they were “*rich, and increased in goods, and had need of nothing.*” I said above that Laodicea was very prosperous at this time in its trade and commerce. The people were rich and well off in the things of this world. And this made them feel quite satisfied with their spiritual state. They thought that their souls were quite as prosperous as their bodies. But in this they were entirely mistaken. For Jesus, who knows what our real condition is much better than we know ourselves, says that at the very time they were thinking so well of themselves, they were “*wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.*” This shows us how easy it is to be mistaken about our true character. The Bible tells us that “*the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked.*” If we have never seen ourselves in a looking-glass, we cannot tell what sort of looking persons we are. We may think ourselves very beautiful, when we are really very ugly. The only way to find this out is to look at ourselves in a mirror. Then we

shall know just what sort of looking persons we are. And it is exactly so with our souls. The Bible is God's mirror. We must look into that, and find out how we look there, if we wish to know what our true character is. For it is not what we think of ourselves, but what God thinks of us, that shows us what kind of persons we really are. If the Laodiceans had done this, they would not have made so great a mistake as they did about themselves.

The *third* thing to notice in this epistle is

The Advice Jesus gave to the Laodiceans.—We find this in verse 18. He says, "I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich." This means the grace of God, which, like gold, is the most valuable of all things, and makes those who have it truly rich. The real Christian is the only rich man. He has "durable riches," "a treasure in heaven, which moth and rust cannot corrupt, nor thieves break through and steal." Jesus also counselled them to buy of him "white raiment, that they might be clothed." This refers to that beautiful "robe of righteousness," that "garment of salvation," which Jesus puts on the souls of all his people. This is the robe, or raiment, which we must all have on if we hope to enter heaven.

He also counselled them to buy of him "eye-salve," with which to "anoint their eyes, that they might see." By this "eye-salve," Jesus means the help of the Holy Spirit. It is only he who can open the eyes of our minds, so that we can understand the things of which the Bible tells us. The "fine gold," and "white raiment," and "eye-salve," here spoken of, are the most precious of all things. And they are things that *we* need, as much as the Laodiceans did.

When Jesus tells them to "*buy*" these things, he does

not mean that they were to give money for them. All the money in the world would not purchase one of them. By *buying* them, he means *trying to get them—asking or praying for* them. They are to be bought, as the prophet says, “*without money and without price*” (Isa. lv. 1). Let us follow the advice of Jesus here. It is advice which suits us as well as it did the Laodiceans.

The *last* thing to notice in this epistle is

The Promise it contains.—We see this in verse 21: “To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.” No one can tell now all that this wonderful promise includes. But we may be sure of this, that all who truly love and serve Jesus here in this life, will share with him the glory and blessedness of his heavenly kingdom in the life to come. This is something wonderful; it is more than any of us can understand. *But it is true*; and if we really love and serve God, we shall know by-and-by *all that it means*.

And now we have finished speaking about these letters of Jesus to the seven churches. Let us try and remember all that Jesus has said in them. The promises given at the close of these letters are “*exceeding great and precious*.” I pray for myself, and all the readers of this book, that these promises may be fulfilled in our experience. This will be better for us than if all the gold, and silver, and gems, and jewels in the world were ours.

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